

POPERY UNMASK'D.

Being the SUBSTANCE of

Dr. *MIDDLETON's*

CELEBRATED

LETTER from ROME:

DEMONSTRATING

An Exact CONFORMITY

BETWEEN

POPERY and PAGANISM.

WITH

An ABSTRACT of the Doctor's REPLY to
the Objections of the Writer of a Popish Book,
intituled, *The Catholic Christian Instructed*, &c.

Design'd as a brief, but seasonable ANTIDOTE to
the spreading *Infection* of POPERY:

And to shew,

What an absurd Religion the Emissaries of Rome are
so zealously endeavouring to propagate in these
Protestant Nations.

L O N D O N:

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P R E F A C E.

AT a Time when the Roman Catholic Missionaries are so busily employ'd throughout these Protestant Kingdoms, in making Profelytes to their Religion ; it is thought highly proper to publish in a small Character (that it may come at an easy Price) a Piece that demonstrates, by the most convincing and uncontrovertable Facts, what that Religion is, which those Missionaries endeavour to persuade us to exchange for a Religion which we have so much Reason to bless God for permitting us to enjoy.

It is well known, that the Popish Emisfaries very carefully endeavour to conceal from the Knowlege of the Protestants, whom they attempt to pervert, many of the monstrous Absurdities of the Religion they are so zealous to propagate ; and, when charg'd with them, that they either boldly deny the Charge, or artfully endeavour to evade it. And indeed it must be owned, there is Reason to believe,

that many of that Communion, who have not been at *Rome*, are unacquainted themselves with some of the superstitious and ridiculous Fopperies practised *there* without Disguise, or Reserve: For our Author takes notice, (p. 60.) that the learned *Mabillon* could not help intimating his Surprize at several Parts of their Worship, and at some of their superstitious Ceremonies, particularly the Benediction of Horses, which he had never seen till he travelled into *Italy*. And the Popish Missionary, who undertakes to vindicate some of the Ceremonies of that Church against our Author, altho' he has not the Courage to deny the Fact, yet labours to render it suspected, and declares, " That
" tho' he had spent the greatest Part of
" his Life abroad, he had never seen or
" heard of any such thing," as that ridiculous Benediction: Whence our Author observes, (p. 61.) " That if these Men
" of Learning, and Teachers of Religion, know so little of what is done at
" *Rome*, how easy must it be to impose
" upon the poor Catholics in *England*,
" and keep them in the Dark, as to the
" more exceptionable Parts of their Worship, which are openly avow'd and
" practised abroad, to the Scandal of all
" the

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“ the Candid and Moderate, even of their
“ own Communion!” — Especially, (we
may add) when they have, to aid their
Arguments in behalf of the most palpable
Absurdities, that enormous Doctrine of
implicit Faith in, and Reliance upon, the
Church’s Authority, preferably to the Re-
vealed Will of God.

The Evidence, therefore, of an Eye-
Witness, of unquestionable Character, can-
not but have the greatest Weight upon all
unprejudic’d Minds; especially when he
supports his Facts by Testimonies, which
the most bigotted of his Adversaries will
not disallow, all of the same Church.
“ My Observations, says our Learned
“ Author *, are grounded on Facts, of
“ which I have been an Eye-witness my-
“ self, and which others perhaps had not
“ the Opportunity of examining person-
“ ally, or considering so particularly, as
“ I have done: And, in my present Re-
“ presentation of them, I have not claim-
“ ed the allowed Privilege of a Travel-
“ ler, to be believed on my own Word;
“ but, for each Article charged on the
“ Church of *Rome*, have generally pro-
“ duced such Vouchers, as they them-
“ selves will allow to be authentic.”

* See Preface to his Octavo Edition.

As

As to the Motives to the Author's Journey, and the Occasion to which his Reflections was owing, take them in his own Words: " Much Leisure, with an
 " infirm State of Health, says he *, was
 " the Cause of my Journey to *Italy*; and,
 " on such an Occasion, I thought it my
 " Duty, to use the Opportunity given me
 " by Providence, towards detecting and
 " exposing, as far as I was able, the true
 " Spring and Source of those Impostures,
 " which, under the Name of Religion,
 " have been forged from time to time,
 " for no other Purpose, than to oppress
 " the Liberty, and engross the Property,
 " of Mankind."

Yet, in his Letter, he owns, that he had resolved, on his Setting-out †, to employ himself chiefly, in searching particularly into some Branches of *Roman* Antiquities; a Study more suitable to his Inclination; and to lose as little Time as possible, in taking notice of the Fopperies and ridiculous Ceremonies of the present Religion of *Rome*: But that when he found the whole Form and outward Dress of their Worship so grossly idolatrous and extravagant, beyond what he had

* See Pref. to Octavo Edition.

† See Letter, p. 5.

imagined,

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imagined, and the *Similitude of the Popish and Pagan Religion* so evident and clear, as to leave him in no Doubt of the *strict Conformity* between both, he resolved to explain and demonstrate the Certainty of it, by comparing together the principal and most obvious Parts of each Worship.

This celebrated Piece was so well received, that Three Editions of it were taken off by the Public, before it received any Answer. And as then a Popish Missionary undertook that Task, and our Author thought fit to reply to it; the inserting of the Substance of that Reply, in which the Roman Catholic Writer's Arguments are fairly quoted and considered; will set the whole Cause between the Protestants and Papists in such a clear Light, as cannot fail of being of singular Use and Benefit to all ingenuous and unprejudiced Persons, of both Religions: For our learned Author declares †, “ That
 “ his Design was not so much to expose
 “ the Folly of some of the Popish Cere-
 “ monies to his Protestant Readers, as to
 “ admonish the *English* Papists, by un-
 “ questionable Facts and Instances, drawn
 “ from the present Practice of *Rome*, in-
 “ to what a Labyrinth of Folly and Im-

† See p. 75.

“ piety their Principles will naturally lead
“ them, when they are pushed to their
“ full Length, and exerted without Reserve
“ or Restraint (as they are at *Rome*); and
“ to lay before them the Forgeries and
“ Impostures which are practised in their
“ Church, to support the absurd Doc-
“ trines which she imposes as the necessa-
“ ry Terms of Catholic Communion.”

Our Author candidly disclaims all personal Prejudices, in these Words, with which he closes his Preface to the Octavo Edition.

“ But whatever be my Opinion of the
“ General Scheme of that Religion, yet,
“ out of Justice to the particular Profes-
“ sors of it, I think myself obliged to
“ declare, that I found much Candor,
“ Humanity, and Politeness, in all those,
“ whom I had the Honour to converse
“ with; and, tho’ my Character and Pro-
“ fession were well known at *Rome*, yet
“ I received particular Civilities from
“ Persons of the first Distinction both in
“ the Church and the Court.”



POPERY *Unmask'd:*

SHEWING THE EXACT CONFORMITY BETWEEN POPERY *and* PAGANISM.

Being the Substance of a LETTER from ROME to
a Friend in ENGLAND.

S I R,

I AM sensible, that by this time you cannot but be desirous to have some account of the entertainment, that I have met with in *Rome*. You have observed, without doubt, from my former letters, that the pleasure of my travels seemed to grow upon me in proportion to the progress, which I made on my journey, and to my approach towards that famous capital; and that every place, which I had seen the last, still pleased me the most. This was certainly true in my road through *Lyons, Turin, Genua, Florence*; but is much more remarkably so with regard to *Rome*; which, of all the places that I have yet seen, or ever shall see, is by far the most delightful: Since all those very things, which had recommended any other place to me, and which I had been admiring before, single and dispersed, in the several cities through which I passed, may be seen in *Rome*,

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as

as it were in one view, and not only in greater plenty, but in greater perfection.

Rome is certainly of all cities in the world the most entertaining to strangers: For whether we consider it in its antient, or present; its civil, or ecclesiastical state; whether we admire the great perfection of arts in the noble remains of *Old Rome*; or the revival of the same arts in the beautiful ornaments of *modern Rome*; every one, of what genius, or taste soever, will be sure to find something, that will deserve his attention, and engage his curiosity: And even those, who have no particular taste or regard at all for things curious, but travel merely for the sake of fashion, and to waste time, will still spend that time with more satisfaction at *Rome*, than any where else; from that easy manner, in which they find themselves accommodated with all the conveniencies of life; that general civility and respect to strangers; that quiet and security, which every man of prudence is sure to find in it. But one thing is certainly peculiar to this city; that though travellers have generally been so copious in their descriptions of it, and there are published in all parts of *Europe* such voluminous collections of its curiosities, yet it is a subject never to be exhausted; since in the infinite variety of entertainment, which it affords, every judicious observer will necessarily find something that has either escaped the searches of others, or that will at least afford matter for more particular and curious remarks, than a common traveller is capable of making, or a general collector has time to reflect on.

As for my own journey to this place, it was not any motive of devotion, which draws so many others hither, that occasioned it. My zeal was not bent on visiting the *holy thresholds of the apostles*, or kissing the feet of their successor. I knew that their ecclesiastical antiquities were mostly fabulous and legendary; supported by fictions and impostures, too gross to employ the attention of a man of sense. For
should

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should we allow, that St. Peter had been at Rome, (of which many learned men however have doubted [a]) yet they had not, I knew, any *authentic monuments* remaining of him; any *visible footsteps* subsisting, to demonstrate his residence among them: And should we ask them for any evidence of this kind, they would refer us to the *impression of his face on the wall of the dungeon, in which he was confined*; or to a *fountain in the bottom of it, raised miraculously by him out of the rock, in order to baptize his fellow-prisoners* [b]; or to the *mark of our Saviour's feet in a stone, on which he appeared to him, and stopped him, as he was flying out of the city from a persecution then raging*: In memory of which, there was a Church built on the spot, called St. Mary delle Piante, or of the marks of the feet; which falling into decay, was supplied by a chapel, at the expence of our cardinal Pool [c]. But the stone itself, more valuable, as their writers say, [d], than any of the precious ones; being a perpetual monument and proof of the Christian Religion; is preserved with all due reverence in St. Sebastian's Church; where I purchased a print of it, with several others of the same kind. Or they would appeal perhaps to the evidence of some miracle wrought at his execution; as they do in the case of St. Paul in a Church called, *At the three fountains*; the place where he was beheaded: On which occasion, it seems, " Instead of blood there issued only
" milk from his veins; and his head, when separated
" from the body, having made three jumps upon the
" ground, raised at each place a spring of living
" water, which retains still, as they would persuade

B 2

" us,

[a] Scalig. in Joh. 18. 31. It. vid. Frid. Spanh. Miscellan. Sacrae Antiq. l. 3. Dissertat. 3.

[b] Vid. Rom. modern. Giorn. 5. c. 13. Rione di Campitelli. It. vid. Aringhi Rom. Subterranean. l. 2. c. 1. It. Mont-fauc. Diar. Ital. c. 13. p. 174.

[c] Rom. Modern. Giorn. 2. Rione di Ripa 21.

[d] Vid. Aring. ibid. l. 3. c. 21.

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“us, the plain taste of milk:” of all which facts we have an account in *Baronius*, *Mabillon*, and all their *gravest authors* [e]; and may see printed figures of them in the description of *modern Rome* [f].

The chief pleasure then, which I proposed to my self, was, to visit the genuine remains, and *venerable reliques*, of *Pagan Rome*; the *authentic monuments of antiquity*, that demonstrate the certainty of those histories, which are the entertainment, as well as the instruction, of our younger years; and which, by the early prejudice of being the first knowledge that we acquire, as well as the delight, which they give, in describing the lives and manners of the greatest men, who ever lived, gain sometimes so much upon our riper age, as to exclude too often other more useful and necessary studies. I could not help flattering myself with the joy that I should have, in viewing the *very place and scene* of those important events, the knowledge and explication of which have ever since been the chief employment of the learned and polite world.

Such fancies as these, I dare say, are common to all men of reading and education; whose dreams upon a voyage to *Italy*, represent nothing but the pleasure of finding out, and conversing with, those ancient sages and heroes, whose characters they have most admired. Nor indeed is this imagination much disappointed in the event; for, as *Cicero* finely observes [g], ‘Whether it be from nature, or some weakness in us, it is certain, that we are much more affected with the sight of those places, where great and famous men have spent most part of their lives, than either to hear of their actions, or read their works:’ and he was not, as he tells us, ‘so much pleased with *Athens* itself, for its stately buildings,

[e] Aring. l. 3. c. 2. It. vid. Baronii Annal. A. D. 69. It. Mabill. Iter Ital. p. 142.

[f] Vid. Rom. modern. Gior. 2. c. 17. Rione di Ripa.

[g] Cic. de Fin. 5.

' buildings, or exquisite pieces of art, as in recollect-
' ing the great men, whom it had bred; in carefully
' visiting their sepulchers; and finding out the place
' where each had lived, or walked, or held his dis-
' putations [b].’ This is what every man of curio-
sity will, in the like circumstances, find true in him-
self; and for my own part, as oft as I have been
rambling about in the very *Rostra of old Rome*, or in
that *Temple of Concord*, where *Tully* assembled the
Senate in *Catiline’s* conspiracy [i], I could not help
fancying myself much more sensible of the force of
his eloquence; whilst the impression of the place
served to warm my imagination to a degree almost
equal to that of his *old audience*.

As therefore my general studies had furnished me
with a competent knowledge of *Roman History*, as
well as an inclination, to search more particularly into
some branches of its antiquities, so I had resolved
to employ myself chiefly in inquiries of this sort;
and to lose as little time as possible, in taking notice
of the fopperies and ridiculous ceremonies of the
present Religion of the place. But I soon found my-
self mistaken; for the whole form and outward
dress of their worship seemed so grossly *idolatrous*
and extravagant, beyond what I had imagined, and
made so strong an impression on me, that I could
not help considering it with a particular regard;
especially when the very reason, which I thought
would have hindred me from taking any notice of it
at all, was the chief cause, that engaged me to pay
so much attention to it: For nothing, I found, con-
curred so much with my original intention of con-
versing with the antients, or so much helped my
imagination, to fancy myself wandering about in *old*
Heathen Rome, as to observe and attend to their *re-*
ligious worship; all whose ceremonies appeared plainly
to have been copied from the *rituals of primitive*

B 3

Paganism;

[B] De Legib. 2. 2.

[i] Vid. Orat. in Catilin. 3. 4. It. Phil. 2. 4.

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Paganism; as if handed down by an uninterrupted succession from the *priests of Old*, to the *priests of New Rome*; whilst each of them readily explained and called to my mind some passage of a *classic author*, where the *same ceremony* was described, as transacted in the *same form and manner*, and in the *same place*, where I now saw it executed before my eyes; So that as oft as I was present at any religious exercise in their *Churches*, it was more natural, to fancy myself looking on at some *solemn act of idolatry in old Rome*, than assisting at a worship, instituted on the principles, and formed upon the plan, of Christianity.

Many of our Divines have, I know, with much learning, and solid reasoning, charged, and effectually proved, the *crime of idolatry on the Church of Rome*: but these controversies (in which there is still something plausible to be said on the other side, and where the charge is constantly denied, and with much subtlety evaded) are not capable of giving that conviction, which I immediately received from my senses; the surest witnesses of fact in all cases; and which no man can fail to be furnished with, who sees *Popery*, as it is exercised in *Italy*, in the *full pomp and display* of its *pageantry*; and practising all its *arts and powers* without CAUTION or RESERVE. This *similitude of the Popish and Pagan Religion*, seemed so evident and clear, and struck my imagination so forcibly, that I soon resolved to give myself the trouble of searching to the bottom; and to explain and demonstrate the certainty of it, by comparing together the principal and most obvious parts of each worship.

The very first thing that a stranger must necessarily take notice of, as soon as he enters their *Churches*, is the use of *incense* or *perfumes* in their *religious offices*: The first step, which he takes within the door, will be sure to make him sensible of it, by the offence that he

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he will immediately receive from the smell, as well as smoke of this *incense*; with which the whole church continues filled for some time after every solemn service. A custom, received directly from *Paganism*; and which presently called to my mind the old descriptions of the *Heathen temples* and *altars*, which are seldom or never mentioned by the *antients* without the epithet of *perfumed* or *incensed* [k].

In some of their *principal Churches*, where you have before you, in one view, a *great number of altars*, and all of them smoking at once with *streams of incense*, how natural is it to imagine one's self transported into the *temple of some Heathen deity*, or that of the *Paphian Venus* described by *Virgil*, *Æn.* l. 420.

— *Ubi templum illi, centumque Sabao, &c.*

Her hundred altars there with garlands crown'd,
And richest incense smoking, breathe around
Sweet odours, &c.

Under the *Pagan Emperors*, the use of *incense* for any purpose of religion was thought so contrary to the obligations of *Christianity*, that in their persecutions, the very method of *trying and convicting a Christian*, was by requiring him only, to throw the least grain of it into the censer, or on the altar [l].

Under the *Christian Emperors*, on the other hand, it was looked upon as a *rite* so peculiarly *heathenish*, that the very *places or houses*, where it could be proved to have been done, were by a *law* of *Theodosius* confiscated to the government [m].

In

[k] Hom. Il. ♀. 148. Virg. *Æn.* 4. v. 453. Theocrit. id. 17. 123. Homer. Il. θ. 48. Virgil. *Æn.* 4. v. 486. Ovid.

[l] Vid. Act. Martyr. Nicandri, &c. apud Mabill. Iter Ital. T. 1. Par. 2. p. 247. Durant. de Ritib. l. 1. c. 9. Hieron. Oper. T. 4. Epist. ad Heliod. p. 8.

[m] Jac. Gothof. de Stat. Paganor. sub Christian. Imper. leg. 12. p. 15.

In the old *bas-reliefs*, or *pieces of sculpture*, where any *Heathen sacrifice* is represented, we never fail, to observe a *boy in sacred habit*, which was always white, attending on the *priest*, with a little *chest* or *box* in his hands, in which this *incense* was kept for the *use of the altar* [n]. And in the same manner still, in the *Church of Rome*, there is always a *boy in surplice*, waiting on the *priest* at the *altar* with the sacred utensils, and, among the rest, the *Thuribulum* or *vessel of incense*, which the *priest*, with many ridiculous motions and crossings, waves several times, as it is smoking, around, and over the altar in different parts of the service.

The next thing, that will of course strike one's imagination, is their use of *holy-water*: For nobody ever goes in or out of a *Church*, but is either sprinkled by the *priest*, who attends for that purpose on solemn days, or else serves himself with it from a *vessel*, usually of marble, placed just at the door, not unlike to one of our *baptismal fonts*. Now this ceremony is so notoriously and directly transmitted to them from *Paganism*, that their own writers make not the least scruple to own it. The *Jesuit la Cerda*, in his notes on a passage of *Virgil*, where this practice is mentioned, says, *Hence was derived the custom of holy Church, to provide purifying or holy water at the entrance of their Churches* [o]. *Aquaminarium* or *Amula*, says the learned *Montfaucon*, was a *vase of holy water*, placed by the *Heathens* at the entrance of their *Temples*, to sprinkle themselves with [p]. The same vessel was by the *Greeks* called Περὶππαιήγιον; two of which, the one of gold, the other of silver, were given by *Cræsus* to the *Temple of Apollo at Delphi* [q]:

And

[n] Vid. *Montfauc. Antiq. Tom. 2. Plâte 23, 24, 25. Ovid. Trist. 5. 5.*

[o] *Virg. Æn. 6. 230. vid. Not.*

[p] Vid. *Montfauc. Antiquit. T. 2. Pt. 1. l. 3. c. 6. Eurip. Jone. v. 96.*

[q] *Herodot. l. 1. 51. Clem. Alex. Strom. l. 1.*

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And the custom of *sprinkling* themselves was so necessary a part of all their religious offices, that the method of excommunication seems to have been by prohibiting to offenders the approach and use of the *holy water pot* [r]. The very composition of this *holy water* was the same also among the *Heathens*, as it is now among the *Papists*, being nothing more than a *mixture of salt with common water* [s]: and the form of the *sprinkling-brush*, called by the antients *asperforium* or *aspergillum*, (which is much the same with what the *priests* now make use of) may be seen in *bas-reliefs*, or *antient coins*, where-ever the *insignia* or *emblems of the Pagan priesthood* are described, of which it is generally one [t].

Platina, in his lives of *the Popes*, and other authors, ascribe the institution of this *holy-water* to *Pope Alexander the first*; who is said to have lived about the year of Christ 113: but it could not be introduced so early, since for some ages after, we find the *primitive fathers* speaking of it, as a custom purely *heathenish*, and condemning it as *impious* and *detestable*. *Juslin Martyr* says, "That it was invented by *dæmons*, in imitation of " the true baptism signified by the *Prophets*, that " their votaries might also have their pretended purifications by water [u]:" and the Emperor *Julian*, out of spite to the *Christians*, used to order the victuals in the markets to be *sprinkled with holy-water*, on purpose either to starve, or force them to eat, what by their own principles they esteem polluted [x].

Thus we see what contrary notions the *Primitive* and *Romish Church* have of this ceremony: the first condemns it as *superstitious*, *abominable*, and *irreconcilable* with *Christianity*: the latter adopts it as highly

[r] Vid. *Æschin. Orat. contra Ctesiphon.* 58.

[s] *Durant. de Rit. l. 1. c. 21. Theocrit. x8. 95.*

[t] Vid. *Montfauc. Antiq. T. 2. P. 1. l. 3. c. 6.* It may be seen on a silver coin of *Julius Cæsar*, as well as many other *Emperors*. Ant. *Agostini discorso sopra le Medaglie.*

[u] *Just. Mart. Apol. 1. p. 91. Edit. Thrilb.*

[x] Vid. *Hospinian. de Orig. Templor. l. 2. c. 25.*

ly edifying and applicable to the improvement of *christian piety*: the one looks upon it as the *contrivance of the Devil to delude mankind*; the other as the *security of mankind against the delusions of the Devil*. But what is still more ridiculous than even the *ceremony itself*, is to see their learned writers gravely reckoning up the several virtues and benefits, derived from the use of it, both to the soul and the body [y]; and, to crown all, producing a long roll of *miracles*, to attest the certainty of each virtue, which they ascribe to it [z]. Why may we not then justly apply to the *present people of Rome*, what was said by the Poet of its old inhabitants, for the use of *this very ceremony*?

Ah nimium faciles, &c. [a]

Ah, easy Fools, to think that a whole Flood
Of water e'er can purge the Stain of Blood !

I do not at present recollect whether the *antients* went so far, as to apply the use of this *holy water* to the purifying or blessing *their horses, asses, and other cattle*; or whether this be an improvement of *modern Rome*, which has dedicated a *yearly festival* peculiarly to this service, called in their vulgar language, the *benediction of horses*; which is always celebrated with much solemnity in the month of *January*; when all the inhabitants of the city and neighbourhood send up *their horses, asses, &c.* to the *convent of St. Antony*, near *St. Mary the Great*, where a *priest in surplice* at the Church-door *sprinkles* with his brush all the *animals* singly, as they are presented to him, and receives from each owner a gratuity proportionable to his zeal and ability [b]. Amongst the rest, I had my own horses blest at the expence of about *eighteen pence*.

of

[y] Durant. de Ritib. l. 1. c. 21. It. Hospin. ibid.

[z] Durant. ibid.

[a] Ovid. Fast. 2. 45.

[b] Rom. modern. Giorn. 6. c. 46. Rione de' Monti.

of our money; as well to satisfy my own curiosity, as to humour the coach-man; who was persuaded, as the common people generally are, that some mischance would befall them within the year, if they wanted the benefit of this *Benediction*. Mabillon, in giving an account of this function, of which he happened also to be an eye-witness, makes no other reflection upon it, than that it was *new* and *unusual* to him [c].

I have met indeed with some hints of a practice, not foreign to this, among the antients; of *sprinkling their horses with water in the Circensian Games* [d]: but whether this was done out of a *superstitious* view, of inspiring any virtue, or purifying them for those races, which were esteemed sacred, or merely to refresh them under the violence of such an exercise, is not easy to determine. But, allowing the *Romish Priests* to have taken the hint from some *old custom of Paganism*; yet this however must be granted them, that they alone were capable of cultivating so coarse and barren a piece of superstition, into a revenue sufficient for the maintenance of *forty or fifty idle Monks*.

No sooner is a man advanced a little forward into their *Churches*, and begins *Lamps and* to look about him, but he will find his *candles*. eyes and attention attracted by a number of *lamps and wax candles*, which are constantly burning before the *Shrines and Images of their Saints*. In all the great Churches of Italy, says Mabillon [e], they hang up lamps at every altar: a sight, which will not only surprise a stranger by the novelty of it, but will furnish him with another proof and example of the conformity of the *Romish* with the *Pagan* worship; by recalling to his memory many passages of the *Heathen Writers*, where their perpetual lamps and candles are described

[c] Mabill. It. Ital. p. 136.

[d] Vid. Rubenii Elect. 2. 18.

[e] Mabil. It. Ital. p. 25.

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described as continually burning before the *altars* and *statues of their Deities* [f].

Herodotus tells us of the *Egyptians*, (who first introduced the use of *lights* or *lamps* into their temples) [g] that they had a *famous yearly festival*, called from the *principal ceremony* of it, the *lighting up of candles* [b]: but there's scarce a *single festival at Rome*, which might not for the same reason be called by the same name.

The *primitive writers* frequently expose the folly and absurdity of this *heathenish custom* [i]: they *light up candles to God*, says *Lactantius*, as if he lived in the dark: and do not they deserve to pass for madmen, who offer lamps to the *Author and Giver of light*?

In the collections of *old inscriptions*, we find many instances of presents and donations from private persons, of *lamps and candlesticks* to the *temples and altars of their gods* [k]: a piece of zeal, which continues still the same in modern *Rome*; where each Church abounds with *lamps of massy silver*, and sometimes even of *gold*: the *gifts of Princes*, and other persons of distinction: and it is surprising to see, how great a number of this kind are perpetually burning before *altars of their principal Saints*, or *miraculous Images*; as *St. Antony of Padua*, or the *Lady of Loretto*; as well as the vast profusion of *wax candles*, with which their Churches are illuminated on every great festival: when the *high altar* covered with *gold and silver plate*, brought out of their treasuries, and stuck full of *wax lights*, disposed in beautiful figures, looks more like the rich *side board of some great prince*, dressed out for a feast, than an *altar* to pay divine worship at.

But

[f] *Plin. Hist. Nat. l. 34. 3. Cic. in Verr. 2. Virg. Æn. 4. 200.*

[g] *Clem. Alex. Strom. l. 1. c. 16.*

[b] *Herod. l. 2. LXII. Edit. Lond.*

[i] *Hospin. de Orig. Templor. l. 2. 22.*

[k] *Grut. Insc. 177. 3.*

But a stranger will not be more surprised at the number of *lamps*, or *wax lights*, burning before their *altars*, than at the number of *offerings*, or *votive gifts*, which are hanging all around them, in consequence of *vows*, made in the time of danger; and in gratitude for deliverances and cures, wrought in sickness or distress: a practice so common among the *Heathens*, that no one *custom of antiquity* is so frequently mentioned by all their writers; and many of their *original donaria*, or *votive offerings*, are preserved to this day in the *cabinets of the curious*; viz. *images of metal, stone, or clay*, as well as *legs, arms*, and other *parts of the body*, which had formerly been hung up in their *temples*, in testimony of some divine favor or cure effected by their *tutelar deity* in that particular member [1]: but the most common of all *offerings* were *pictures*, representing the history of the miraculous cure or deliverance, vouchsafed upon the vow of the donor. *Offerings or Votive gifts.* *Votive pictures.*

Nunc, dea, nunc, succurre mihi, &c.

Now, goddess, help; for thou canst help bestow,
As all these pictures round thy altars show*.

A friend of *Diagoras the philosopher*, called the *Atheist*, having found him once in a *temple*, as the story is told by *Cicero* [m], You, says he, who think the *Gods* take no notice of human affairs, do not you see here by this number of pictures, how many people, for the sake of their *vows*, have been saved in storms at sea, and got safe into harbour? Yes, says *Diagoras*, I see how it is; for those are never painted, who happen to be drowned. The temples of *Æsculapius* were more especially rich in these offerings, which, *Livy* says, were the price and pay for the cures, that he had wrought for the sick [n]: where they used always to hang up.

C

and

[1] Vid. Montfauc. Antiquit. T. 2, p. 1, l. 4. c. 4. 5. 6.

* Tibull. El. 1. 3.

[m] Cic Nat. Deor. l. 3. 253.

[n] Liv. l. 45. 28.

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and expose to common view, in tables of brass or marble, a catalogue of all the *miraculous cures*, which he had performed for his votaries [o]: a remarkable fragment of one of these tables is still remaining and published in Gruter's [p] *Collections*, having been found in the ruins of a *temple of that God*, in the *island of the Tiber at Rome*: upon which the learned Mont-faucon makes this reflection; that in it are either seen the *wiles of the Devil*, to deceive the credulous; or else the *tricks of Pagan Priests*, suborning men to counterfeit diseases, and miraculous cures [q].

Now this piece of superstition had been found of old so beneficial to the *priesthood*, that it could not fail of being taken into the scheme of the *Romish Worship*: where it reigns at this day in as full height and vigor, as in the *ages of Pagan Idolatry*; and in so gross a manner, as to give scandal and offence even to some of their own communion. Polydore Virgil, after having described this practice of the antients, " In the

same manner, says he, do we now offer
Votive " up in our Churches little images of wax;
images. " and as oft as any part of the body is hurt,

" as the hand or foot, &c. we presently
 " make a vow to God, or one of his Saints, to whom
 " upon our recovery we make an offering of that
 " hand or foot in wax: which custom is now come
 " to that extravagance, that we do the same thing for
 " our cattle, which we do for ourselves, and make
 " offerings on account of our oxen, horses, sheep;
 " where a scrupulous man will question, whether in
 " this we imitate the religion or the superstition of
 " our ancestors [r]."

The altar of St. Philip Neri says Baronius [s],
 " shines

[o] Strabo, T. 1. 515.

[p] Gruter. Inscript. p. 71. Et Montfauc. Antiq. T. 2. P. 1, l. 4. c. 6.

[q] Ibid.

[r] Pol. Virg. de Inv. Rer. l. 5. 1.

[s] Baron. Ann. 1. An. 57. q. 162. It. Aring. Rom. Subter, o. 1. l. 30. it. l. 6. 27.

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15

“ shines with votive pictures and images, the proofs
“ of as many miracles; receiving every day the ad-
“ ditional lustre of fresh offerings from those, who
“ have been favoured with fresh benefits:” amongst
whom the present *Pope* himself pays, as I have been
told, a yearly acknowledgment, for a miraculous de-
liverance, that he obtained by the invocation of *this*
Saint, when he had like to have perished under the
ruins of a house overturned in an earth-quake.

There is commonly so great a number of these *of-
ferings* hanging up in their *Churches*, that, instead of
adding any beauty, they often give offence, by cover-
ing or obstructing the sight of something more valu-
able and ornamental: which we find to have been the
case likewise in the *old heathen temples*; where the
Priests were obliged sometimes to take them down,
for the obstruction, which they gave to the beauty
of a fine pillar or altar [t]. For they consist chiefly,
as has been said, of *arms and legs*, and little *figures*
of *wood or wax*, but especially *pieces of board* painted,
and sometimes indeed *fine pictures*, describing the
manner of the deliverance obtained by the *miraculous*
interposition of the Saint invoked: of which *offerings*
the *blessed Virgin* is so sure always to carry off the
greatest share, that it may truly be said of her, what
Juvenal says of the *Goddeß Isis*, whose religion was
at that time in the greatest vogue at *Rome*, that the
painters get their livelihood out of her.

Pictores quis nescit ab Iside pasci?

As once to *Isis*, now it may be said,
That painters to the *Virgin* owe their bread.

As oft as I have had the curiosity to look over these
Donaria, or *votive Offerings*, hanging round the *Shrines*
of their *Images*, and consider the several stories of each,
as they are either expressed in painting, or related in
writing,

C 2

[t] Liv. l. 40. 51.

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writing, I have always found them to be *mere copies*, or *verbal translations*, of the *originals of Heathenism*: for the *vow* is often said to have been *divinely inspired*, or *expresly commanded*; and the cure and deliverance to have been wrought, either by the *visible apparition*, and *immediate hand*, of the *tutelar Saint*, or by the notice of a *dream*, or some other *miraculous admonition* from heaven. "There can be no doubt, *say their* " *writers* [u], but that the images of our Saints often " *work signal miracles*, by procuring health to the " *infirm*, and appearing to us often in dreams, to " *suggest something of great moment for our service.*"

And what is all this, but a revival of the *old impostures*, and a repetition of the same *old stories*, of which the *antient inscriptions* are full, with no other difference, than what the *Pagans* ascribed to the imaginary help of *their Deities*, the *Papists* as foolishly impute to the favor of *their Saints*? As may be seen by the few instances, that I have subjoined [w], out of the great plenty, which all *books of antiquities* will furnish: and whether the reflection of *Father Montfaucon* on the *Pagan Priests*, mentioned above, be not, in the very same case, as justly applicable to the *Romish*

[u] Durant. de Ritib. l. 1. c. 5.

[w] SILVANO SALVTARI
L. MANLIVS SATVRNINVS
EX VISO POSVIT.

Gruter. p. 65.

MINERVAE. MEMORI
CAELIA. IVLIANA.
INDVLGENTIA. MEDICINARUM
EIVS GRAVI. INFIRMITATE.
LIBERATA. D. P.

48.

SILVANO

&c.

SOMNIO MONITA.

ib. 62.

IOVI OPT. &c.
FLAVIVS. COSMVS
IVSSV DEI FECIT.

20.

And

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mish Priests, I must leave to the judgment of my reader.

But the gifts and offerings of the kind, that I have been speaking of, are the fruits only of vulgar zeal, and the presents of inferior people; whilst princes and great persons, as it used to be of old [x], frequently make offerings of large vessels, lamps; and even statues of massy silver or gold; with diamonds, and all sorts of precious stones of incredible value; so that the Church of Loretto is now become a Proverb Loretto. for its riches of this sort, just as Apollo's Temple at Delphi was with the antients on the same account.

In the famed treasury of this Holy House, one part consists, as it did likewise among the Heathens, of a wardrobe. For the very idols, as Tertullian observes, used to be dressed out in curious robes, of the choicest stuffs and fashion [y]. While they were shewing us therefore the great variety of rich habits, with which that treasury abounds; some covered with precious stones, others more curiously embroidered by such a Queen, or Princess, for the use of the miraculous Image; I could not help recollecting the picture which old Homer draws of Queen Hecuba of Troy, prostrating herself before the miraculous Image of Pallas, with a present of the richest and best wrought gown, that she was mistress of.

Τῶν ἐν ἀεσπαμένῃ Ἐνάει, &c.

A gown she chose, the best and noblest far,
Sparkling with rich embroid'ry, like a star, &c. *

C 3

The

And that this is the stile also of votive Inscriptions among the Papists, we see by the following one in a Church at Milan,

DIVAE. SAVINAE, &c.
LIVIA. EVPHEMIA. . IN
ACERBO. STOMACHI.
CRVCIATV. OPEMNACTA,
V. S. M. D. XI.

[x] Liv. l. 40. 37.

[y] De Idololat. p. 116. E lit. Rigalt,

* Il. 7. 293.

The mention of *Loretto* puts me in mind of the surprise I was in, at the first sight of the *holy Image*: for its face is as black as a *Negro's*; so that one would take it rather for the representation of a *Proserpine*, or *infernal Deity*, than, what they impiously stile it, of the *Queen of Heaven*. But I soon recollected, that this very circumstance of its complexion, made it but resemble the more exactly the *old Idols of Paganism*, which, in *sacred* as well as *profane Writers*, are described to be *black with the perpetual smoke of lamps and incense* [x].

When a man is once engaged in reflections of this kind, imagining himself in some *Heathen Temple*, and expecting as it were some *sacrifice*, or other *piece of Paganism*, to ensue, he will not be long in suspense, before he sees the finishing act, and last scene, of *genuine Idolatry*, in crouds of bigot votaries, prostrating themselves before some *Image of wood or stone*, *Idols*, or and paying divine honours to an *Idol of image-worship*. their own erecting. Should they squabble with us here about the meaning of the word *Idol*, *St. Jerom* has determined it to the very case in question, telling us, that by *Idols are to be understood the Images of the Dead* [a]: and the worshippers of such *Images* are used always, in the *stile of the Fathers*, as terms synonymous and equivalent to *Heathens* or *Pagans* [b].

As to the practice itself, it was condemned by many of the wisest *Heathens*, and for several ages, even in *Pagan Rome*, was thought impious and detestable: for *Numa*, we find, prohibited it to the *old Romans*, nor would suffer any *Images* in their *Temples*: which constitution they observed religiously, says *Plutarch* [c], for the first *hundred and seventy years of the city*. But as *Image-worship* was thought abominable even by some

[x] Baruch. vi. 19, 21. Arnob. l. 6.

[a] Hier. Com. in Isa. c. xxxvii.

[b] Pamphili Apol. pro Orig. vid. Hieron. Op. Tom. 5. p. 233. Ed. Par.

[c] Vid. Plutar. in Vit. Num. p. 65. C.

some Pagan Princes, so by some of the Christian Emperors it was forbidden on pain of death [d]: not because these Images were the representations of Demons, or false Gods, but because they were vain senseless Idols, the work of mens hands, and for that reason unworthy of any honor: and all the instances and overt-acts of such worship, described and condemned by them, are exactly the same with what the Papists practise at this day; viz. lighting up candles; burning incense; hanging up garlands, &c. as may be seen in the law of Theodosius before-mentioned; which confiscates that house or land, where any such act of Gentile superstition had been committed [e]. These Princes, who were influenced, we may suppose, in their constitutions of this sort, by the advice of their bishops, did not think Paganism abolished, till the adoration of Images was utterly extirpated; which was reckoned always the principal of those Gentile Rites, that, agreeably to the sense of the purest ages of Christianity, are never mentioned in the imperial laws, without the epithets of profane, damnable, impious, &c. [f].

What opinion then can we have of the present practice of the Church of Rome, but that, by a change only of name, they have found means to retain the thing; and, by substituting their Saints in the place of the old Demigods, have but set up Idols of their own, instead of those of their forefathers? In which it is hard to say, whether their assurance, or their address, is more to be admired, who have the face to make that the principal part of Christian worship, which the first Christians looked upon as the most criminal part even of Paganism; and have found means to extract gain, and great revenues, out of a practice, which in primitive times would have cost a man both life and estate.

But our notion of the Idolatry of modern Rome will be much heightened still and confirmed, as oft as we

[d] Vid. Gothof. Comment. de statu Pagan, sub Christian. Imperatorib. Leg. 6. p. 7.

[e] Ibid. Leg. 12. p. 15.

[f] Ibid. Leg. 17. 20.

follow them into those *Temples*, and to those very *Altars*, which were built originally by *their Heathen ancestors*, the *old Romans*, to the honour of their *Pagan Deities*; where we shall hardly see any other alteration, than the *shrine* of some *old Hero* filled by the meaner statue of some *modern Saint*: nay, they have not always, as I am well informed, given themselves the trouble of making even this change, but have been content sometimes to take up with the *old Image*, just as they found it; after *baptizing* it only, as it were, or consecrating it anew, by the imposition of a *Christian name*. This *their antiquaries* do not scruple to put strangers in mind of, in shewing their *Churches*; and it was, I think, in that of *St. Agnes*, where they shewed me an *antique statue* of a young *Bacchus*, which with a new name, and some little change of drapery, stands now worshipped under the title of a *female Saint*.

Tully reproaches *Clodius*, for having publicly dedicated the statue of a common strumpet, under the name and title of the *Goddess Liberty*: a practice, still frequent with the present *Romans*, who have scarce a fine image or picture of a *female Saint*, which is not said to have been designed originally by the sculptor or painter, for the representation of his own mistress: and who dares, may we say ironically with the old Roman, [f] to violate such a Goddess as this; the statue of a whore?

The noblest *Heathen Temple* now remaining in the world, is the *Pantheon* or *Rotunda*; which, as the inscription over the portico informs us, having been impiously dedicated of old by *Agrippa* to *Jove* and all the Gods, was piously reconsecrated by *Pope Boniface the fourth*, to the blessed *Virgin* and all the *Saints*. With this single alteration, it serves as exactly for all the purposes of the *Papish*, as it did for the *Pagan worship*, for which it was built. For as, in the old *Temple*, every one might find the God of his country,
and

and address himself to that *Deity*, whose religion he was most devoted to; so it is the same thing now; every one chuses the *Patron* whom he likes best; and one may see here *different services* going on at the same time at *different altars*, with distinct congregations around them, just as the inclinations of the people lead them, to the worship of this or that particular *Saint*.

And what better title can the *new Demi gods* shew, to the adoration now paid to them, than the *old ones*, whose shrines they have usurped? Or how comes it to be less criminal to *worship images* erected by the *Pope*, than those which *Agrippa*, or that, which *Nebuchadnezzar* set up? If there be any real difference, most people, I dare say, will be apt to determine in favour of the *old possessors*: For those *heroes of antiquity* were raised up into *Gods*, and received *divine honours*, for some *signal benefits*, of which they had been the *authors* to mankind; as the *invention of arts and sciences*; or of something highly useful and necessary to life [g]: whereas it is certain, that many of the *Romish Saints* were never heard of, but in their own *legends*, or *fabulous histories*; and many more, instead of any services done to mankind, owe all the honours now paid to them, to their *vices*, or their *errors*; whose merit, like *that of Demetrius in the Acts* [h], was their skill of raising rebellions in defence of an *Idol*, and throwing kingdoms into convulsions for the sake of some *gainful imposture*.

And as it is in the *Pantheon*, it is just the same in all the other *Heathen Temples*, that still remain in *Rome*; they have only pulled down *one Idol*, to set up *another*; and changed rather the name, than the object, of their worship. Thus the little *Temple of Vesta*, near the *Tiber*, mentioned by *Horace* [i], is
now

[g] Cic. Nat. Deor. l. 2. 223. Off. 3. 299.

[h] Act. Apost. xix. 23.

[i] Carm. l. 1. 2.

now possessed by the *Madonna of the Sun* [k]; that of *Fortuna Virilis*, by *Mary the Egyptian* [l]; that of *Saturn* [m], (where the public treasure was antiently kept) by *St. Adrian*; that of *Romulus* and *Remus* in the *Via Sacra*, by two other brothers, *Cosmas* and *Damianus* [n]; that of *Antonine the Godly*, by *Laurence the Saint* [o]: But for my part, I should sooner be tempted, to prostrate myself before the statue of a *Romulus*, or an *Antonine*, than that of a *Laurence*, or a *Damian*; and give *divine honours* rather with *Pagan Rome*, to the *founders of empires*, than with *Popish Rome*, to the *founders of monasteries*.

At the foot of *Mount Palatine*, in the way between the *Forum* and *Circus Maximus*, on the very spot, where *Romulus* was believed to have been suckled by the wolf, there stands another little round *Temple*, dedicated to him in the early times of the republic, into which, for the present elevation of the soil without, we now descend by a great number of steps. From the tradition of the wonderful escape, which *Romulus* had in this very place, when exposed in his infancy to perish in the *Tiber*; as soon as he came to be a God, he was looked upon as singularly propitious to the health and safety of young children: from which notion, it became a practice for nurses and mothers, to present their *sickly infants* before his shrine in this little *Temple* [p], in confidence of a cure or relief by his favour. Now, when this *Temple* was

[k] Rom. Mod. Giorn. 2. Rione de Ripa, 5.

[l] Ibid. 4.

[m] Ib. Gior. 5. Rione di Campitelli, 15.

[n] Urbanus VIII. Pont. Max. Templum Geminis
Urbis Conditoribus Superstitiosè dicatum
A Felice IIII. S. S. Cosmæ & Damiano Fratribus
Piè Consecratum, Vetustate Labefactatum
In splendidiorem Formam Redegit
Ann. Sal. M.DC.XXXIII.

[o] Ibid. 16.

[p] Rom. Moderna, Giornata 2da, c. 36. Rione di Ripa,

was converted afterwards into a *Church*; lest any piece of superstition should be lost, or the people think themselves sufferers by the change, in losing the benefit of such a protection for their children; care was taken to find out, in the place of the *Heathen God*, a *Christian Saint*, who had been exposed too in his infancy, and found by chance like *Romulus*; and for the same reason, might be presumed to be just as fond of children, as their *old Deity* had been: and thus the worship paid to *Romulus*, being now transferred to *Theodorus*, the old superstition still subsists, and the custom of presenting children at *this shrine* continues to this day without intermission; of which I myself have been a witness, having seen, as oft as I looked into *this Church*, ten or a dozen women decently dressed, each with a *child* in her lap, sitting with silent reverence before the *altar of the Saint*, in expectation of his *miraculous influence* on the health of the infant.

In consecrating these *Heathen Temples* to the Popish worship, that the change might be the less offensive, and the *old superstition* as little shocked as possible, they generally observed some resemblance of quality and character in the *Saint*, whom they substituted to the *old Deity*: "If, in converting the profane worship of the *Gentiles* (says the *Describer of modern Rome* [q]) to the pure and sacred worship of the *Church*, the faithful use to follow some rule and proportion, they have certainly hit upon it here, in dedicating to the *Madonna*, or *holy Virgin*, the *Temple* formerly sacred to the *Bona Dea*, or *Good Goddesses*." But they have more frequently on these occasions had regard rather to a *similitude of name* between the *old* and *new Idol*. Thus, in a place formerly sacred to *Apollo*, there now stands the *Church of Apollinaris*; built there, as they tell us [r], that the *profane name of that Deity* might be converted into

[q] Rom. Mod. Gior, 2. Rion, di Ripa, 10.
[r] Ibid. Gio. 3. 21.

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into the *glorious name of this Martyr*: And where there antiently stood a *Temple of Mars*, they have erected a *Church to Martina*, with this inscription:

*Martyrii gestans virgo Martina coronam,
Ejecto hinc Martis numine, Tempa tenet.*

Mars hence expell'd; *Martina*, martyr'd maid,
Claims now the worship, which to *him* was paid.

In another place, I have taken notice of an *Altar* erected to *St. Baccho* [s]; and, in their stories of their *Saints*, have observed the names of *Quirinus*, *Romula* & *Redempta*, *Concordia*, *Nympha*, *Mercurius* [t]: which, though they may, for any thing that I know, have been the genuine names of *Christian Martyrs*, yet cannot but give occasion to suspect, that some of them at least have been formed out of a corruption of the *old names*; and that the adding of a modern termination, or *Italianizing* the *old name* of a *Deity*, has given existence to some of their present *Saints*: Thus the corruption of the word *Soraacte* (the old name of a mountain mentioned by *Horace* [u], in sight of *Rome*) has, according to *Mr. Addison*, added one *Saint* to the *Roman Calendar*; being now softened, [x] *because it begins with an S*, into *St. Oresle*; in whose honour a monastery is founded on the place: a change very natural, if we consider that the *title of Saint* is never written by the *Italians* at length, but expressed commonly by the single letter *S*, as *S. Oraacte*: And thus this *holy Mountain* stands now under the protection of a *Patron*, whose being and power is just as imaginary, as that of its old guardian *Apollo*.

Sancti custos Soraactis Apollo. Vir. Æn. 9.

No

[s] Ibid. Gior. 6. 37.

[t] Aringh. Rom. Subter. l. 2. 21. l. 3. 12. l. 4. 16, 22, l. 5. 4.

[u] Carm. l. 1. 9.

[x] Addison's travels from *Pesaro*, &c. to *Rome*,

No suspicion of this kind will appear extravagant to those, who are at all acquainted with the *History of Popery*; which abounds with instances of the grossest forgeries both of *Saints* and *Reliques*, which, to the scandal of many even among themselves [y], have been imposed for genuine on the poor ignorant people. It is certain, that, in the earlier ages of Christianity, the *Christians* often made free with the *sepulchral stones of Heathen monuments*, which, being ready cut to their hands, they converted to their own use; and, turning downwards the side, on which the *old epitaph* was engraved, used either to inscribe a new one on the other side, or leave it perhaps without any *inscription* at all, as they are often found in the *Catacombs of Rome* [z]. Now this one custom has frequently been the occasion of ascribing *Martyrdom* and *Sainthood* to persons and names of mere *Pagans*.

Mabillon gives a remarkable instance of it in an *old stone*, found on the grave of a *Christian*, with this inscription [a].

D. M.
IVLIA EVODIA
FILIA FECIT.
MATRI.

And because in the same grave there was found likewise a *glass vial*, or *lacrymatory vessel*, tinged with a reddish colour, which they call *blood*, and look upon as a certain proof of *martyrdom* [b], this *Julia Evodia*, though undoubtedly a *Heathen*, was presently adopted both for *Saint* and *Martyr*, on the authority of an *inscription*, that appears evidently to have been one of those above-mentioned, and borrowed from a *heathen Sepulchre*. But whatever the party there buried might have been, whether *Heathen* or *Christian*;

D

it

[y] Mabill. Iter Ital. p. 225.

[z] Aringh. Rom. Subt. l. 3. c. 22.

[a] Vid. Mabill. ibid.

[b] Mont. Diar. It. p. 118.

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it is certain, however, that it could not be *Evodia herself*, but her mother only, whose name is not there signified.

The same author mentions some *original papers*, which he found in the *Barbarine Library*, giving a pleasant account of a negotiation between the *Spaniards* and *Pope Urban the VIIIth*, in relation to this very subject [c]. The *Spaniards*, it seems, have a *Saint*, held in great reverence in some parts of *Spain*, called *Viár*; for the farther encouragement of whose worship, they solicited the *Pope* to grant some *special indulgences* to his altars; and, upon the *Pope's* desiring to be better acquainted first with his character, and the proofs, which they had of his *saintship*, they produced a *stone* with these *antique letters* S. VIAR. which the antiquaries readily saw to be a small fragment of some *old Roman Inscription*, in memory of one, who had been *Præfectus. VIARum*, or *overseer of the highways*.

But we have in *England* an instance still more ridiculous, of a *fictitious saintship*, in the case of a certain *Saint*, called *Amphibolus*; who, according to our *Monkish Historians*, was *Bishop of the isle of Man*, and fellow *Martyr and Disciple of St. Alban*: yet the learned *Bishop Usher* has given good reasons to convince us, that he owes the honour of his *saintship*, to a mistaken passage in the *old acts or legends of St. Alban* [d]: where the *Amphibolus* mentioned, and since revered as a *Saint and Martyr*, was nothing more than the *cloak*, which *Alban* happened to have, at the time of his execution; being a word derived from the *Greek*, and signifying a *rough shaggy cloak*, which *ecclesiastical persons* usually wore in that age.

They pretend to shew us here at *Rome*, two *original impressions* of our *Saviour's face*, on two different
hand-

[c] Vid. Mabill. Iter Ital. p. 145.

[d] Usher. de Britan. Eccles. Primord. c. 14. p. 539. 4to. It. Bp. Floyd's Histor. Acc. of Ch. Govern. in Gr. Brit. c. 7. p. 151.

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handkerchiefs; the one, sent a present by himself to *Abgarus Prince of Edessa*, who by letter had desired a picture of him; the other, given by, him at the time of his execution, to a *Saint, or holy woman*, named *Veronica*, upon a *handkerchief*, which she had lent him to wipe his face on that occasion: both which handkerchiefs are still preserved, as they affirm, and now kept with the utmost reverence; the first in *St. Sylvester's Church*; the second in *St. Peter's*; where, in honour of this *sacred relique*, there is a fine altar built by *Pope Urban the VIIIth*, with the statue of *Veronica* herself, with the following inscription [e].

SALVATORIS IMAGINEM VERONICÆ
SUDARIO EXCEPTAM
VT LOCI MAIESTAS DECENTER
CVSTODIRET URBANVS VIII.
PONT. MAX.
MARMOREVM SIGNVM
ET ALTARE ADDIDIT CONDITORIVM
EXTRVXIT ET ORNAVIT.

There is a prayer in their books of offices, ordered by the rubric, to be addressed to this sacred and miraculous picture, in the following terms. — *Conduct us, O thou blessed figure, to our proper home, where we may behold the pure face of Christ* [f].

But notwithstanding the authority of *this Pope*, and his *inscription*, this *VERONICA*, as one of the best authors has shewn [g], like *Amphitrolus* before-mentioned, was not any real person, but the name given to the picture itself by the old writers, who mention it; being formed by blundering and confounding the words *VERA ICON*, or *true image*, the title inscribed perhaps, or given originally to the handkerchief, by the first contrivers of the imposture.

D 2

These

[e] Vid. Aringh. Rom. Subterraneis. Tom. 2. p. 453.

[f] See Conform. of Ant. and Modern Ceremonies, p. 158.

[g] Mabill. Iter Ital. p. 88.

28 *The Conformity between*

These stories however, as fabulous and childish as they appear to men of sense, are yet urged by grave authors in defence of their *image-worship*, as certain proofs of its *divine origin*, and sufficient to confound all the *impious opposers* of it [b].

I shall add nothing more on this article, than that whatever worship was paid by the *antients* to THEIR *heroes* or *inferior deities*, the *Romanists* now pay the same to THEIR *Saints* and *Martyrs*; as their *own inscriptions* plainly declare; which, like those mentioned above of St. *Martina*, and the *Pantheon*, generally signify that the "honours, which of old had been "impiously given in that place to the false God, are "now piously and rightly transferred to the Christian Saint:" or as one of their *celebrated poets* expresses himself in regard to St. *George*;

*Ut Martem Latii, sic nos Te, Dive Georgi,
Nunc colimus, &c.* Mantuan.

As Mars our Fathers once ador'd, so now
To Thee, O George, we humbly prostrate bow.

And every-where through *Italy*, one sees their *sacred inscriptions* speaking the pure language of *Paganism*, and ascribing the same *Powers, Characters,* and *Attributes*, to their *Saints*, which had formerly been ascribed to the *Heathen Gods*; as the few here exhibited will evince.

[b] Aringh. Rom. subt. T. 2. l. 5. c. 4. Rom. Mod. Gior. Rion. di Bor.

Popish

Papish Inscriptions [i].

MARIA ET FRANCISCE
TUTELARES MEL.

DIVO EVSTORGIO
QVI HVIC TEMPLO
PRAESIDET.

NVMINI.
DIVI. GEORGII.

POLLENTIS. POTENTIS.
INVICTI.

DIVIS
PRAESTITIBVS IVVANTIBVS
GEORGIO STEPHANOQVE
CVM DEO OPT. MAX.

Pagan Inscriptions. [k].

MERCVRIO ET MINERVÆ
DIIS TVTULARIB.

DII QVI HVIC TEMPLO
PRAESIDENT.

NVMINI
MERCVRII SACR.

HERCVLI. VICTORI.
POLLENTI. POTENTI.
INVICTO.

PRAESTITI IOVI
S.

DIIS.
DEABVS
QVE. CVM
IOVE.

Boldonius censures the author of the last inscription, for the absurdity of putting the *Saints before God himself*; and imitating too closely the *antient* inscription, which I have set against it, where the same impropriety is committed in regard to *Jupiter*.

D 3

As

[i] Vid. Boldonii Epigraphica, p. 439. It. p. 348. It. p. 422. It. 649.

[k] Gruter. Corp. Inscript. p. 50. It. Cic. Or. pro Lege Man. 15. It. Grut. p. 54. It. p. 50. It. p. 22. It. ib. p. 2.

As to that celebrated act of *Popish Idolatry*, the *Adoration of the Host*; I must confess, *Adoration of the Host.* that I cannot find the least resemblance of it in any part of the *Pagan worship*: and as oft as I have been standing by at *Mass*, and seen the whole congregation prostrate on the ground, in the humblest posture of adoring, at the *elevation of this consecrated piece of bread*; I could not help reflecting on a passage of *Tully*, where speaking of the absurdity of the *Heathens* in the choice of *their Gods*, "But was any man, *says he*, "ever so mad, as to take that which he feeds upon, "for a God [l]?" This was an extravagance reserved for *Poper*y alone; and what an *old Roman* could not but think too gross, even for *Egyptian Idolatry* to swallow, is now become the *principal part of worship*, and the distinguishing *Article of Faith*, in the *Creed of modern Rome*.

But their *temples* are not the only places where we see the proofs and overt-acts of their *superstition*: the whole face of the country has the visible *characters* of *Paganism* upon it; and where-ever we look about us, we cannot but find, as *St. Paul* did in *Athens* [m], clear evidence of its being possessed by a *superstitious and idolatrous people*.

The *old Romans*, we know, had *their Gods*, who presided peculiarly over the *roads, streets, Rural* and *high-ways*, called *Viales, Semitales, shrines.* *Compitales*: whose little *temples* or *altars* decked with flowers, or whose *statues* at least coarsely carved of wood or stone, were placed at convenient distances in the public ways, for the benefit of travellers, who used to step aside to pay their devotions to these *rural Shrines*, and beg a prosperous journey and safety in their travels [n]. Now this custom prevails still so generally in all

Popish

[l] Cic. de Nat. Deor. 3.

[m] Aët. Apost. xvii. 17.

[n] Apulei. Florid. 1. Plaut, Merc. 5. 2,

Popery and Paganism. 31

Popish countries, but especially in *Italy*, that one can see no other difference between the *old* and *present superstition*, than that of changing the name of the *Deity*, and *christening* as it were the *old Hecate in tri-viis*, by the new name of *Maria in trivio*; by which title, I have observed one of their Churches dedicated in this city [o]: and as the Heathens used to paint over the ordinary *Statues of their Gods* with red or some such gay colour [p], so I have oft observed the coarse *Images of these Saints* so daubed over with a gaudy red, as to resemble exactly the description of the *God Pan* in *Virgil*, Eclog. X.

Sanguineis ebuli baccis minioque rubentem.

[The process, as it may be called, of Idol-making, and Idol-worship, is as beautifully set forth, as finely ridiculed, in the book of *Wisdom*, chap. xiii. ver. 11. to 19. " Now a carpenter, [or timber-wright] after
 " he hath sawn down a tree meet for the purpose,
 " and taken off all the bark skilfully round about,
 " and hath wrought it handsomely, and made a
 " vessel thereof fit for the service of man's life; and,
 " after spending the refuse [or chips] of his work to
 " dress his meat, hath filled himself; and taking the
 " very refuse among those which served to no use,
 " (being a crooked piece of wood, and full of knots)
 " hath carved it diligently, when he had nothing
 " else to do, and formed it by the skill of his un-
 " derstanding, and fashioned it to the image of a
 " man; or made it like some vile beast, laying it over
 " with vermilion, and with paint, colouring it red,
 " and covering every spot therein; and when he
 " had made a convenient room for it, set it in a
 " wall, and made it fast with iron; for he provided
 " for it, that it might not fall, knowing that it was
 " unable

[o] Rom. modern. Gior. Rion. di Colonna, c. 11.

[p] Plin. Hist. N. l. 35. 12. Ibid. l. 33. 7. It. Pau'an.
 2. 2.

“ unable to help itself (for it is an image, and hath
 “ need of help); then maketh he prayer for his goods,
 “ for his wife and children, and is not ashamed to
 “ speak to that which hath no life. For health he
 “ calleth upon that which is weak: for life, prayeth
 “ to that which is dead: for aid, humbly beseecheth
 “ that which hath least means to help; and for a
 “ good journey, he asketh of that which cannot
 “ set a foot forward: and for gaining and getting,
 “ and for good success of his hands, asketh ability
 “ to do, of him that is most unable to do any
 “ thing.”

The same writer finely observes, that such of the heathens as worshipped the great luminaries of heaven, although blameable, that they could not, thro' the works of God, *see the first Author of beauty who created them*; yet are they less culpable, than those *who in dead things placed their hope; who called them gods, which are the works of mens hands*, c. xiii. ver. 10. For *that which is made with hands* (c. xiv. v. 8.) is cursed, as well as he that made it: he, because he made it; and it, because, being corruptible, it was called God.—Being *stumbling-blocks* (ver. 11.) to the souls of men, and a *snare to the feet of the unwise*. For the *devising of Idols was the beginning of spiritual fornication*; and the *inventions of them, the corruption of life*. But to return:]

In passing along the road, it is common to see travellers on their knees before these *rustic altars*; which none ever presume to approach without some act of reverence; and those, who are most in haste, or at a distance, are sure to pull off their hats at least, in token of respect: and I took notice, that our postillions used to look back upon us, to see how we behaved on such occasions, and seemed surprised at our passing so negligently before places esteemed so sacred.

But besides these *Images* and *Altars*,
Roads. there are frequently erected on the road
 huge

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huge wooden crosses [q], dressed out with flowers, and hung round with the trifling offerings of the country-people; which always put me in mind of the *superstitious veneration*, which the *Heathens* used to pay to some old trunks of trees, or posts, set up in the highways, which they held sacred [r], or of that venerable Oak in Ovid [s], covered with garlands, and votive offerings:

Stabat in his ingens, &c.

Reverend with age, a stately Oak there stood,
Its branches widely stretch'd, itself a wood,
With ribbands, garlands, pictures, cover'd o'er,
The fruits of pious vows from rich and poor.

This description of the *Pagan Oak* puts me in mind of a story, that I have met with here, of a *Popish Oak* very like it; viz. how a certain person, devoted to the worship of the *Virgin*, hung up a picture of her in an Oak, that he had in his vineyard, which grew so famous for its miracles, that the Oak soon became covered with votive offerings, and rich presents from distant countries, so as to furnish a fund at last for the building of a great Church to the miraculous picture; which now stands dedicated in this city, under the title of *St. Mary of the Oak* [t].

But what gave me still the greater notion of the superstition of these countries, was to see those little Oratories, or rural Shrines, sometimes placed under the cover of a tree or grove; agreeably to the descriptions of the old idolatry, in the sacred as well as profane writers [u]; or more generally raised on some eminence, or, in the phrase of Scripture, on high places; the

[q] Durant. de Ritib. l. 1. c. 6.

[r] Tibul. El. 1. 11.

[s] Metamorph. 8.

[t] Rom. Modern. Gior. 3. c. 30. Rien. della Reg.

[u] Lucus & Ara Dianæ. Hor.

the constant scene of *idolatrous worship* in all ages; it being an universal opinion among the *Heathens*, that the Gods in a peculiar manner loved to reside on *eminences* or *tops of mountains* [w]: which *Pagan notion* prevails still so generally with the *Papists*, that there is hardly a *rock* or *precipice*, how dreadful or difficult soever of access, that has not an *Oratory*, or *Altar*, or *Crucifix* at least, planted on the *top* of it.

Among the rugged *mountains of the Alps* in *Savoy*, very near to a little town called *Modana*, there stands on the *top of a rock*, a *chapel*, with a *miraculous Image* of our *Lady*, which is visited with great devotion by the people, and sometimes, we were told, by the *King himself*; being famous, it seems, for a *miracle* of a singular kind, (*viz.*) the restoring of *dead-born children to life*; but so far only, as to make them capable of *Baptism*, after which they again expire; and our landlord assured me, that there was daily proof of the truth of this *miracle*, in children brought from all quarters to be presented before this Shrine; who never failed to shew manifest tokens of life, by *stretching out their arms*, or *opening their eyes*, or even sometimes *making water*, whilst they were held by the priest in presence of the *Image*. All which appeared so ridiculous to a *French gentleman*, who was with me at the place, but had not heard the story from our landlord, that he looked upon it as a banter or fiction of my own, till I brought him to my author, who with his wife, as well as our *voiturins*, very seriously testified the truth of it; and added farther, that, when the *French army* passed that way in the last war, they were so impious, as to throw down this *sacred Image* to the bottom of a vast precipice hard by it, which, though of wood only, was found below entire and unhurt by the fall, and so replaced in its *Shrine*, with greater honour than ever, by the attestation of this *new miracle*.

On the top of *Mount Senis*, the highest mountain of

[w] Il. 8. 50. Cic. pro Mil.

of the *Alps*, in the same passage of *Savoy*, covered with perpetual snow, they have another *Chapel*, in which they perform divine service once a year, in the *Month of August*; and sometimes, as our guides informed us, to the destruction of the whole congregation, by the accident of a sudden tempest in a place so elevated and exposed. And this surely comes up to the description of that worship, which the *Jews* were commanded to extirpate from the face of the earth: "Ye shall utterly destroy the places wherein the nations served their Gods, upon the high mountains, and upon the hills, and under every green tree: and ye shall overthrow their altars, break their pillars, burn their groves, and hew down the graven Images of their Gods [x]."

When we enter their towns, the case is still the same, as it was in the country; we find every-where the same marks of *Idolatry*, and the same reasons to make us fussy, that we are still treading *Pagan ground*; whilst at every corner we see *Images* and *Altars*, with *lamps* or *candles* burning before them; exactly answering to the descriptions of the *antient writers* [y]; and to what *Tertullian* reproaches the *Heathens* with, that "their streets, their markets, their baths, were not without an idol [z]." But above all, in the *pomp* and *solemnity* of their *Holy-days*, and *Holy-days*. especially their *religious processions*, we see the genuine remains of *Heathenism*, and proof enough to convince us, that this is still the same *Rome*, which *old Numa* first tamed and civilized by the *arts of religion*: who, as *Plutarch* says [a], "by the institution of supplications and processions to the Gods, which inspire reverence, whilst they give pleasure to the spectators, and by pretended
" mira-

[x] Deuteron. xii. 2, 3.

[y] Xenoph. l. 4. It. Eurip. Elec. 387. Lucian. in Prometh. Cic. Off. 3. 26.

[z] De Spectac. c. 8.

[a] Plutar. in Numa, p. 16.

“ miracles, and divine apparitions, reduced the fierce
 “ spirits of his subjects under the power of super-
 “ stition.”

The descriptions of the *religious pomps*
Processions. and *processions* of the Heathens come so
 near to what we see on every *festival of*
the Virgin, or other *Romish Saint*, that one can hardly
 help thinking these *Popish ones* to be still regulated by
 the *old ceremonial of Pagan Rome*. At these solemnities
 the *chief magistrate* used frequently to assist in *robes*
of ceremony; attended by the *Priests* in *surplices* [b],
 with *wax candles* in their hands, carrying upon a
pageant or *thensa* the *Images of their Gods*, dressed out
 in their best cloaths: these were usually followed by
 the *principal youth* of the place, in *white linen vest-*
ments or surplices, *singing hymns* in honour of the God,
 whose *festival* they were celebrating; accompanied
 by *crouds of all sorts*, that were initiated in the *same*
religion, all with *flambeaux* or *wax candles* in their
 hands. This is the account which *Apuleius*, and
 other authors, give us of a *Pagan procession*; and I may
 appeal to all, who have been abroad, whether it might
 not pass quite as well for the description of a *Popish*
one. *Monsieur Tournefort*, in his travels through *Greece*,
 reflects upon the *Greek Church*, for having retained
 and taken into their present worship many of the *old*
rites of Heathenism, and particularly that of “ carrying
 “ and dancing about the Images of the Saints in their
 “ processions to singing and music [c]:” the reflec-
 tion is full as applicable to his own, as it is to the
Greek Church; and the practice itself so far from giv-
 ing scandal in *Italy*, that the learned Publisher of the
Florentine Inscriptions takes occasion to shew the *con-*
formity between them and the *Heathens*, from this
 very instance of carrying about the *pictures of their*
Saints,

[b] *Apul. ibid. Vid. Pausan. 2. 7.*

[c] *Tournefort. Lit. 3. 44.*

Saints, as the *Pagans* did those of their *Gods*, in their *sacred processions* [d].

In one of these *processions*, made lately to *St. Peter's* in the time of *Lent*, I saw *Self-whip-*
that ridiculous penance of the *flagellantes pers.*
or *self-whippers*, who march with *whips*
in their hands, and lash themselves as they go along,
on the bare back, till it is all covered with blood; in
the same manner, as the *fanatical Priests* of *Bellona* or
the *Syrian Goddesses*, as well as the votaries of *Isis*, used
to lash and cut themselves of old, in order to please
the *Goddesses*, by the sacrifice of their own blood: which
mad piece of discipline we find frequently mentioned,
and as often ridiculed, by the *antient writers*.

But they have another exercise of the same kind,
and in the same season of *Lent*, which, under the
notion of penance, is still a more absurd mockery of
all religion: when on a certain day, appointed an-
nually for this discipline, men of all conditions assem-
ble themselves towards the evening, in one of the
Churches of the *City*; where whips or lashes made
of cords are provided, and distributed to every person
present; and after they are all served, and a short of-
fice of devotion performed, the candles being put out,
upon the warning of a little bell, the whole company
begin presently to strip, and try the force of these
whips on their own backs, for the space of near an
hour: during all which time, the *Church* becomes,
as it were, the proper Image of *Hell*: where nothing
is heard but the noise of lashes and chains, mixed with
the groans of these self-tormentors; till, satiated with
their exercise, they are content to put on their cloaths,
and the candles being lighted again, upon the tinkling
of a second bell, they all appear in their proper dress.

Seneca, alluding to the very same effects of *fana-*
ticism in *Pagan Rome*, says; " So great is the force of
" it on disordered minds, that they try to appease the
E " Gods

[d] Inscript. Antiq. Flor. p. 377.

“ Gods by such methods, as an enraged man would
 “ hardly take to revenge himself. But, if there be
 “ any Gods, who desire to be worshipped after this
 “ manner, they do not deserve to be worshipped at
 “ all; since the very worst of Tyrants, though they
 “ have sometimes torn and tortured peoples limbs,
 “ yet have never commanded men to torture them-
 “ selves [e].” But there is no occasion to imagine,
 that all the blood, which seems to flow on these oc-
 casions, really comes from the backs of these Bigots:
 for it is probable, that, like their *frantic Predecessors*,
 they may use some *craft*, as well as *zeal*, in this their
 fury; and I cannot but think, that there was a great
 deal of justice in that edict of the *Emperor Commodus*,
 with regard to these *Bellonarii*, or *whippers* of *anti-*
quity, though it is usually imputed to his cruelty,
 when he commanded, that they “ should not be suf-
 “ fered to impose upon the spectators, but be obliged
 “ to cut and slash themselves in good earnest [f].”

If I had leisure to examine the *pretended*
Miracles miracles, and pious frauds, of the *Romish*
and prodigies. Church, I should be able to trace them
 all from the same source of *Paganism*;
 and find, that the *Priests* of *New Rome* are
 not degenerated from *their predecessors*, in the art of
 forging these *holy impostures*; which, as *Livy* observes
 of *Old Rome* [g], “ were always multiplied in pro-
 “ portion to the credulity and disposition of the poor
 “ people to swallow them.”

In the early times of the *republic*, in the war with
 the *Latins*, the Gods *Castor* and *Pollux* are said to have
 appeared on *white horses* in the *Roman army*, which by
 their assistance gained a complete victory: in memory
 of which, the General *Posthumius* vowed and built a
Temple publicly to those Deities; and, for a proof of
 the fact, there was shewn, we find, in *Cicero's* time,
 the

[e] Seneca Fragm. apud Lipsii Elect. l. 2. 18.

[f] Lamprid. in Commodus, 9.

[g] Liv. l. 24. 10.

the mark of the horses hoofs on a rock at Regillum, where they first appeared [b].

Now this *miracle*, with many others, that I could mention of the same kind [i]. has, I dare say, as authentic an attestation, as any which the *Papists* can produce; the decree of a *Senate* to confirm it; a *Temple* erected in consequence of it; *visible marks* of the fact on the spot where it was transacted; and all this supported by the concurrent testimony of the *best authors of antiquity*; amongst whom *Dionysius of Halicarnassus* says [k], that there were subsisting in his time at *Rome* many evident proofs of its reality, besides a *yearly festival*, with a *solemn sacrifice* and *procession* in memory of it: yet for all this, these stories were but the jest of men of sense, even in the times of *Heathenism* [l]; and seem so extravagant to us now, that we wonder, how there could ever be any so simple, as to believe them.

What better opinion then can we have, of all those of the same stamp in the *Popish Legends*, which they have plainly built on this foundation, and copied from this very original? Nor content with barely copying, they seldom fail to improve the old story, with some additional forgery and invention of their own. Thus in the present case, instead of *two persons on white horses*, they take care to introduce *three*; and not only on *white horses*, but at the head of *white armies*; as in an old history of the holy wars, written by a pretended eye-witness, and published by *Mabillon*, it is solemnly affirmed of *St. George, Demetrius, and Theodorus* [m]. They shew us too, in several parts of *Italy*, the *marks of hands and feet on rocks and stones*, said to have been effected miraculously by the apparition

E 2

[b] Cic. de Nat. Deor. l. 3. 5. ib. 2. 2. Vid. de Div. 1. 34.

[i] Cic. Nat. D. 2. 2. Plutar. in vita P. Æmil. Val. Max. c. 8. 1. L. Flor. l. 1. 11. l. 1. 12.

[k] Dion. Halic. l. 6. p. 337. Edit. Hudson.

[l] Aut si hoc fieri potuisset dicis, doceas oportet quomodo, nec fabellas aniles proferas. Cic. Nat. Deor. 3. 5.

[m] Vid. Bell. Sac. Hist. in Mabill. Iter Ital. T. 1. Par. 2. p. 138, 155.

vision of some *Saint* or *Angel* on the spot [n]: just as the impression of *Hercules's* feet was shewn of old on a stone in *Scythia* [o], exactly resembling the footsteps of a man. And they have also many *Churches* and public monuments erected, in testimony of such miracles. viz. of *Saints* and *Angels* fighting visibly for them in their battles; which though always as ridiculous as that above-mentioned, are not yet supported by half so good evidence of their reality [p] Particularly, there is an Altar of marble in *St. Peter's*, one of the greatest pieces of modern sculpture, representing, in figures as large as the life, the story of *Attila* King of the *Hunns*, who in full march towards *Rome* with a victorious army, in order to pillage it, was frightened and driven back by the apparition of an *Angel*, in the time of Pope *Leo* the first.

The Castle and Church of *St. Angelo* have also their title from the apparition of an *Angel* over the place, in the time of *Gregory* the Great [q]

“ The religion of *Ceres* of *Enna* was cele' rated, as
 “ *Cicero* informs us, with a wonderful devotion,
 “ both in public and private, through all *Sicily*: for
 “ her presence and divinity had been frequently mani-
 “ fested to them by numerous prodigies, and many
 “ people have received immediate help from her in
 “ their utmost distress. Her Image therefore in that
 “ Temple was held in such veneration, that whenever
 “ men beheld it, they fancied themselves beholding
 “ either *Ceres* herself, or the figure of her at least not
 “ made by human hands, but dropt down to them
 “ from heaven [r].” Now if, in the place of *Ceres*
 of *Enna*, we should insert into this relation, our *Lady*
 of *Loretto*, or of *Impruneta*, or any other miraculous
 Image in *Italy*: the very same account would suit as

ex-

[n] R. Mod. Gior. 5. Rion. di Campetalli, c. 3.

[o] Herodot. l. 4. p. 4. 251. Edit. Lond.

[p] Boldonii Epigraph. l. 2. p. 349.

[q] Rom. Moder. Giorn. 1. Rion. di Borgo, 1.

[r] Cic. in Verr. 4. 49. lb. 5. 7.

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exactly with the history of the modern Saint, as it is told by the present *Romans*, as it formerly did with that of *Ceres*, as it is transmitted to us by the *Antients*. And what else indeed are all their *miraculous Images*; which we see in every great town, said to be made by *Angels*, and sent to them from *heaven*, [s], but mere copies of the ancient *Fables*, of the Διοπετὲς Ἀγάλμα, or *Image of Diana dropt from the Clouds* [t]; or the *Palladium of Troy*, which, according to *old Authors* [u], was a wooden statue three cubits long, which fell from *heaven*.

In one of their *Churches* here, they shew a *picture of the Virgin*, which, as their *Writers* affirm [w], was brought down from *heaven* with great pomp, and after having hung a while with surprising lustre in the air, in the sight of all the *Clergy and people of Rome*, was delivered by *Angels* into the hands of *Pope John the First*, who marched out in solemn procession, in order to receive this *celestial present*. And is not this exactly of a piece with the old *Pagan story* of *King Numa*, when, in this same *City*, he issued from his palace, with *Priests and People* after him, and with *public prayer, and solemn devotion*, received the *Ancile*, or *heavenly shield*, which in the presence of all the *people of Rome*, was sent down to him with much the same formality from the clouds [x]? And as that wise Prince, for the security of his *heavenly present*, ordered several others to be made so exactly like it, that the *original* could not be distinguished [y]; so the *Romish Priests* have thence taken the hint, to form, after each *celestial pattern*, a number of *copies*, so perfectly resembling each other, as to occasion endless

E 3

squab-

[s] Aring. Rom. Subter. l. 5. c. 5. Montfauc. Diar. ibid.

137.

[t] Act. Apost. c. xix. 35.

[u] Vid. Pitisci Lexic. Antiquitat.

[w] Vid. Rom. Modern. Giorn. 2. Rion, di Ripa, c. 43.

[x] Ov. Fast. l. 3.

[y] Ibid.

squabbles among themselves about their several pretensions to the *divine original*.

The *rod of Moses*, with which he performed his *miracles*, is still preserved, as they pretend, and shewn here with great devotion, in one of the principal Churches: and just so the *rod of Romulus*, with which he performed his *auguries*, was preserved by the Priests, as a *sacred relique*, in old Rome, and kept with great reverence from being *touched or handled* by the people [x]: which *rod* too, like most of the *Popish reliques*, had the testimony of a *miracle* in proof of its sanctity; for when the *Temple*, where it was kept, was burnt to the ground, it was found intire under the ashes, and untouched by the flames [a]: which same *miracle* has been borrowed and exactly copied by the present Romans, in many instances; particularly, in a *miraculous Image* of our Saviour in *St. John Lateran*; over which the flames, it seems, had no power, though the Church itself has been twice destroyed by fire [b].

Nothing is more common among the Speaking miracles of Popery, than to hear of Images, images. that on certain occasions had spoken; or shed tears; or sweat; or bled: and do not we find the very same stories in all the Heathen Writers? Of which I could bring numberless examples from old as well as new Rome, from Pagan as well as Popish legends. Rome, as the Describer of it says [c], "abounds with these treasures, or speaking Images:" but he laments the negligence of their ancestors, in not recording, so particularly as they ought, the very words, and other circumstances, of such conversations. They shew us here an Image of the Virgin, which reprimanded Gregory the Great, for passing by her too carelessly: and, in St. Paul's Church,

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[x] Plutar. in Camil. 145. D.

[a] Valer. Max. c. 8. 10. It. Cic. de Divin. 1. 17. Plut. in Rom.

[b] Rom. Moder. Gior. 6. Rion. di Monti, 11.

[c] Rom. Mod. R. di Monti, 21.

a crucifix, which spoke to St. Bridgit [d]. *Durantus* mentions another Madonna, which "spoke to the sexton, in commendation of the piety of one of her votaries [e]." And did not the Image of Fortune do the same, or more, in old Rome? Which, as Authors say, "spoke twice in praise of those matrons, who had dedicated a Temple to her [f]."

They have a Church here dedicated to *St. Maria del Piante*, *St. Mary the Weeper*, *Weeping in* or to a Madonna famous for shedding tears *images*.

[g]: They shew an Image too of our Saviour, which for some time before the Sacking of Rome wept so heartily, that the good fathers of the Monastery were all employed in wiping its face with cotton [h]. And was not the case just the same among their ancestors, when, on the approach of some public calamity, the statue of Apollo, as *Livy* tells us, "wept for three days and nights successively [i]?" They have another Church built in honour of an Image, which bled very plentifully, from Bleeding in a blow given to it by a blasphemer [k]. *images*.

And were not the old Idols too as full of blood, when, as *Livy* relates, "all the Images in the temple of *Juno* were seen to sweat with drops of it [l]?"

All which prodigies, as well modern as antient, are derived from the same source, viz. the contrivance of priests or governors, in order to draw some gain or advantage out of the poor people, whom they thus impose upon; [counting life a pastime, and their time here a market for gain: For, say they, we must be get-

[d] Ibid. Gior. 5. Rion. di Campetalli. Mabill. D. Italic. p. 132.

[e] Durant. de Rit. l. 1. c. 5.

[f] Valer. Max. 1. 8.

[g] Rom. Mod. Gior. 3. Rion. della Regosa, 5.

[h] Ib. Gior. 6. Rio. di Mon. 31.

[i] Liv. l. 43. 13.

[k] Rom. Mod. Gior. 3. Rio. di Ponte, 17.

[l] Liv. 23. 31. Ib. 27. 4.

44 *The Conformity between*

getting every way, though it be by evil means, Wisd. vi. 12.]

Xenophon, though himself much addicted to *superstition*, speaking of the *Prodigies*, which preceded the Battle of *Leuctra*, and portended victory to the *Thebans*, tells us, that "some people looked upon them "all as forged and contrived by the magistrates [m]." the better to animate and encourage the multitude: and as the *originals* themselves were but *impostures*, it is no wonder, that the *copies* of them appear such *gross* and *bungling forgeries*.

I have observed a story in *Herodotus* *Holy house*. [n], not unlike the account, which is given of the *famed travels* of the *house of Loretto*; of certain *sacred mystical things*, that *travelled about from country to country*, and, after *many removals and journeys*, settled at last, for good and all, in *Delus*. But this *imposture* of the *holy house* might be suggested rather, as *Mr. Addison* has observed [o], by the extraordinary veneration paid in *old Rome* to the *cottage of its founder Romulus*: which was held "famed by the people, and repaired with great care "from time to time, with the same kind of materials, "so as to be kept up in the same form, in which it "was originally built [p]." It was turned also, I find, like this other *cottage of our Lady*, into a *temple*, and had *divine service* performed in it, till it happened to be burnt down by the *fire of a sacrifice* in the time of *Augustus* [q]: but what makes the similitude still more remarkable is, that this *pretended cottage of Romulus* was shewn on the *Capitoline Hill* [r]; whereas it is certain, that *Romulus* himself lived on Mount
Pa-

[m] Xenoph. Hellen. l. 6.

[n] Herodot. l. 4. p. 235. Edit. Lond.

[o] Addison's Travels from Pesaro to Rome.

[p] Dion. Halicar. l. 1.

[q] Dio, l. 48. p. 437.

[r] Val. Max. l. 4. c. 11. Vitruv. l. 2. c. 1. Vid. etiam Macrob. Sat. 1. 15. Virg. Æn. 8. 65.

Palatine [s]: so that if it had really been the *house of Romulus*, it must needs, like the *holy house of Loretto*, have taken a leap in the air, and suffered a *miraculous translation*, though not from so great a distance, yet from *one hill* at least to the *other*.

But if we follow their own writers, it is not the *holy house of Loretto*, but the *homely cradle of our Saviour*, that we should compare rather with the *little house of Romulus*: which cradle is now shewn in *St. Mary the Great*, and on *Christmas-day* exposed on the high altar to the adoration of the people; being held in the same veneration by *present Rome*, as the *humble cottage of its founder* had been by its *old inhabitants*. *Rome*, says *Baronius* [1], "Is now in possession of that noble monument of Christ's Nativity, made only of wood, without any ornament of silver or gold; and is made more happily illustrious by it, than it was of old by the cottage of *Romulus*; which, though built only with mud and straw, our ancestors preserved with great care for many ages."

The *Liquefaction or melting of St. Januarius's Blood at Naples*, whenever it is brought to his head, which is done with great solemnity on the day of his festival [u], whilst at all other times it continues dried and congealed in a glass phial, is one of the standing and most authentic miracles of Italy. Yet Mr. *Addison*, who twice saw it performed, assures us, that instead of appearing to be a *real miracle*, he thought it one of the most bungling tricks, that he had ever seen [w].

Mabillon's account of the fact seems to solve it very

[1] Plutarch. in *Rom.* p. 30. *Dion. Hal.* l. 2. p. 110. Ed. Hudl.

[1] Vid. *Baron. An.* 1. *Christi* 5. It. *Aring. Rom. Subt.* l. 6. 1.

[u] *Aringh. Rom. Subter.* l. 1. 16.

[w] *Addison's Trav. at Naples.*

very naturally, without the help of a *miracle* [x]: for during the time that a *Mass* or two are celebrated in the Church, the other priests are tampering with this *phial of blood*, which is "suspended all the while in such a situation, that as soon as any part of it begins to melt by the heat of their hands, or other management, it drops of course into the lower side of the glass which is empty;" upon the first discovery of which, the *miracle* is proclaimed aloud, to the great joy and edification of the people.

But by what way soever it be effected, it is plainly nothing else, but the *copy of an old cheat* of the same kind, transacted near the same place, which *Horace* makes himself merry with in his journey to *Brundisium*; telling us, how the priests would have imposed upon him and his friends, at a town called *Gnatia*, by persuading them, that the "Frankincense in the temple used to dissolve and melt miraculously of itself, without the help of fire [y]."

In the *Cathedral Church of Ravenna*, I saw in *Mosaic Work* the pictures of those *Archbishops* of the place, who, as all their historians affirm [z], were chosen for several ages successively by the special designation of the *Holy Ghost*, who, in a full assembly of the Clergy and People, used to descend visibly on the *person elect*, in the shape of a Dove. If the fact of such a descent be true, it will easily be accounted for by a passage in *Aulus Gellius*, (whence the hint was probably taken) who tells us, that *Archytas* the *Philosopher* and *Mathematician* formed a "Pigeon of wood so artificially, as to make it fly by the power of Mechanism, just as he directed it [a]." And we find from *Strada*, that many tricks of this kind were actually contrived for the diversion of *Charles the Fifth* in his Monastery, by one *Turrianus*, who made little birds

[x] Mabill. *Iter Ital.* p. 106.

[y] Hor. Sat. 1. 5. v. 98.

[z] Hist. Raven. &c. Aring. Rom. Subt. l. 6. c. 48.

[a] A. Gell. Noct. Att. l. 10. 12.

birds fly out of the room, and back again, by his great skill in Machinery [b].

It would be endless to run through all the *Popish Miracles*, which are evidently forged, or copied from the *originals of Paganism*; since there is scarce a *Prodigy* in the *old Historians*, or a *Fable* in the *old Poets*, but what is transcribed into *their Legends*, and swallowed by their silly Bigots, as certain and undoubted facts.

The story of *Arion the Musician*, riding triumphant with his harp on the back of a *Dolphin*, that took him up when *thrown over-board at Sea*, is, one would think, too grossly fabulous, to be applied to any purpose of *Christian Superstition*: yet our *present Romans* so far surpass the *old* in *Fable* and *Imposture*, that out of this *single story* they have coined many of the *same stamp*, viz. of *Dolphins taking up and bringing ashore* with great pomp several of *their Saints*, both dead and alive, who have been *thrown into the sea by Infidels*, either to drown, or to deprive them of burial [c].

The *fable of the Harpyes*, those *furies* or *winged monsters*, who were so troublesome to *Aeneas* and his *Companions* [d], seems to be copied in the very *first Church* within the walls of *Rome*, close to the gate of the people, as it is called, by which we enter it from the north: where there is an *Altar* with a *public Inscription* [e], signifying, that it was built by "Pope *Paschal* the second, by divine Inspiration, in order to drive away a nest of huge dæmons or monsters, who used to perch upon a tree in that very place, and terribly insult all who entered the city."

The *Popish Writers* themselves are forced to allow, that many both of *their reliques*, and *their miracles*,
have

[b] Vid. Gronovii Not. in Gell. Ibid.

[c] Aringh. Rom. Subterr. l. 1. c. 9, 10.

[d] Virg. Æn. 3. 211.

[e] For the Inscription itself, see our Author, Octavo Edit. p. 212.

have been forged by the craft of *Priests*, for the sake of money and lucre. *Durantus*, a zealous defender of *all their ceremonies*, gives several instances of the former; particularly of *the bones of a common thief*, which had for some time been *honoured with an altar, and worshipped, under the title of St. Martin* [f]. And for the latter; *Lyra*, in his *Comment on Bel and the Dragon*, observes, "that sometimes also, in the Church, very great cheats are put upon the people, by false miracles, contrived, or countenanced at least, by their priests, for some gain and temporal advantage [g]." And *what their own authors* confess of *some of their miracles*, we may venture, without any breach of charity, to believe of them all; nay, we cannot indeed believe any thing else without impiety; and without supposing God to concur, in an extraordinary manner, to the establishment of *fraud, error, and superstition*, in the world.

The refuge or protection given to all, who fly to the Church for shelter, is a privilege directly transferred from the *heathen temples* to the *Popish Churches*; and has been practised in *Rome*, from the time of its founder *Romulus*; who, in imitation of the *Cities of Greece*, opened an *Asylum* or *Sanctuary* to fugitives of all Nations.

Romulus, ut saxo lucum circumdedit alto,
Quilibet huc, inquit, confuge; tutus eris [b].

But we may observe the great moderation of *Pagan*, above that of *Popish Rome*, in regard to this custom; for I do not remember that there was ever more than *one Asylum* in the times of the *Republic*; whereas there are now *some hundreds* in the same city; and when that single one (which was opened rather for

[f] Durant. de Ritib. l. 1. c. 25.

[g] Vid. Nic. Lyr. in Dan. c. 14.

[b] Ov. Fast. 3.

for the increase of its inhabitants, than the protection of criminals) was found in the end to give too great encouragement to mischief and licentiousness; they inclosed it round in such a manner, as to hinder all access to it [i]: whereas the present Popish Sanctuaries stand perpetually open, not to receive strangers, but to shelter villains; so that it may literally be said of these, what our Saviour said of the Jewish Temple, that they have turned the house of Prayer into a den of Thieves [k].

In the early ages of Christianity there were many limitations put upon the use of this privilege by Emperors and Councils; and the greater crimes of murder, adultery, rapes, theft, &c. were especially excepted from the benefit of it [l]: but now they scruple not to receive to sanctuary, persons guilty of the most detestable crimes; and it is owing without doubt to this policy of holy Church, that murders are so common with them in Italy on slight provocations; whilst there is a Church always at hand, and always open, to secure offenders from legal punishment; several of whom have been shewn to me in different places, walking about at their ease, and in full security, within the bounds of their sanctuary.

In their very Priesthood they have contrived, one would think, to keep up as near a resemblance, as they could, to that Sovereign Pontif. of Pagan Rome: and the sovereign Pontif, instead of deriving his succession from St. Peter, (who if ever he was at Rome, did not reside there, at least in any pomp or splendor) may with more reason, and a much better plea, style himself the Successor of the Pontifex Maximus, or chief Priest of old Rome; whose authority and dignity [m] was the greatest in the Republic;

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[i] Dio, l. 47. p. 385.

[k] Matth. xxi. 13.

[l] Justin. Novel. 17. c. 7.

[m] Cic. pro Dom. 1. Fest. l. 11. in voce Max. Id. in Ordo Sacerdotum. Vell. Pater, l. 2. 128.

public; and who was looked upon as the *arbiter or judge of all things*, civil as well as sacred, human as well as divine: whose power, established almost with the foundation of the City, "was an omen, (says *Polydore Virgil*) and sure presage, of that priestly Majesty, by which *Rome* was once again to reign as universally, as it had done before by the force of its arms [n]."

But of all the *sovereign Pontiffs of Pagan Rome*, it is very remarkable that *Caligula* was the first, who ever offered *his foot to be kissed* by any, who approached him: which raised a general indignation through the City, to see themselves reduced to suffer so great an indignity. Those, who endeavoured to excuse it, said, that it was not done out of insolence, but vanity; and for the sake of shewing *his golden slipper, set with jewels*. *Seneca* declames upon it, in his usual manner, as the last affront to liberty, and the introduction of a *Persian slavery into the manners of Rome* [o]. Yet this servile act, unworthy either to be imposed or complied with by man, is now the standing ceremonial of *Christian Rome*, and a necessary condition of access to the *reigning Popes*; though derived from no better origin, than the frantic pride of a brutal *Pagan Tyrant*.

The great variety of their *religious orders and societies of Priests* seems to have been formed upon the plan of the *old colleges or fraternities of the Augurs, Pontifices, Salii, Fratres Arvales, &c.* The *Vestal Virgins* might furnish the hint for the foundation of *Nunneries*: and I have observed something very like to the *rules and austerities of the monastic life*, in the character and manner of several *Priest, of the Heathens*, who used to live by themselves, retired from the world, near to the *Temple or Oracle of the Deity*, to whose particular service

[n] Pol. Vir. In. rer. l. 4. 14.

[o] Senec. de Benef. l. 2. 12.

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service they were devoted; as the *Selli*, the *Priests of Dodonæan Jove* [p], a self-mortifying race.

Ἀμφὶ δὲ Σελλοὶ, &c. *

Whose groves the *Selli*, race austere, surround;
Their feet unwash'd, their slumbers on the Ground.
Mr. Pope.

From the character of these *Selli*, or, as others call them, *Ellii*, the Monks of the *Pagan World*; seated in the fruitful soil of *Dodona*; abounding, as *Hesiod* describes it, with every thing, that could make life easy and happy; and whither no man ever approached them without an offering in his hands; we may learn, whence their successors of modern times have derived that peculiar skill, or prescriptive right, of chusing the richest part of every country for the place of their settlement †.

But above all, in the old descriptions of the lazy mendicant Priest among the *Heathens*, who us'd to travel [q] from house to house, with sacks on their backs; and, from an opinion of their sanctity, raise large contributions of money, bread, wine, and all kind of victuals, for the support of their fraternity; we see the very picture of the begging Friars; who are always about the street in the same habit, and on the same errand, and never fail to carry home with them a good full sack of provisions for the use of their convent.

Cicero, in his book of laws, restrains this practice of begging, or gathering alms, to one particular order of Priests, and that only on certain days; because, as he

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says,

[p] Plato in *Timæo*, p. 1044.

* Il. 17. 234.

† Vid. *Sophoc. Trachin.* p. 340. v. 1175. Edit. Turneb. & Schol. Triclin.

[q] *Apuleius Metam.* l. 8. p. 262.

says [r], "it propagates superstition, and impoverishes families." Which, by the way, may let us see the policy of the *Church of Rome*, in the great care, that they have taken to multiply their *begging orders*.

I could easily carry on this parallel, through many more instances of the *Pagan* and *Popish* ceremonies, if I had not already said enough, to shew from what spring all that superstition flows, which we so justly charge them with; and how vain an attempt it must be, to justify, by the principles of *Christianity*, a worship formed upon the plan, and after the very pattern, of pure *Heathenism*. I shall not trouble myself with inquiring at what time, and in what manner, these several corruptions were introduced into the *Church*: whether they were contrived by the *intrigues and avarice of Priests*, who found their advantage in reviving and propagating *impostures*, which had been of old so profitable to their *predecessors*; or whether the *genius of Rome* was so strongly turned to *fanaticism* and *superstition*, that they were forced, in condescension to the humour of the people, to dress up their *new religion* to the modes and fopperies of the *old*. This, I know, is the *principle*, by which their *own Writers* defend themselves, as oft as they are attacked on this head.

Aringhus, in his account of *subterraneous Rome*, acknowledges this conformity between the *Pagan* and *Popish* rites, and defends the admission of the ceremonies of *Heathenism* into the *service of the Church*, by the authority of their *wisest Popes* and *Governors* [s], "who found it necessary, *he says*, in the conversion of the *Gentiles*, to dissemble and wink at many things, and yield to the times; and not to use force against customs, which the people were so obstinately fond of; nor to think of extirpating at once every thing, that had the appearance of profane; but

[r] Cic. de Legib. l. 2. g. 16.

[s] Vide Aring. Rom. Subter. Tom. 1. l. 1. c. 21.

“ but to supersede in some measure the obligation of
“ the sacred laws; till these converts, convinced by
“ degrees, and informed of the whole truth, by the
“ suggestions of the Holy Spirit, should be content to
“ submit in earnest to the yoke of *Christ*.”

It is by the same principles, that the *Jesuits* defend the *concessions*, which they make at this day to their *Profelytes* in *China*; who, where pure Christianity will not go down, never scruple to compound the matter between *Jesus* and *Confucius*; and prudently allow, what the *stiff old Prophets* so impolitically condemned, a *partnership between God and Baal*; of which though they have often been accused at the *Court of Rome*, yet I have never heard, that their conduct has been censured. But this kind of reasoning, how plausible soever it may be, with regard to the first ages of Christianity, or to nations just converted from *Paganism*, is so far from excusing the present *Genilism* of the *Church of Rome*, that it is a direct condemnation of it; since the necessity alleged for the practice, if ever it had any real force, has not, at least for many ages past, at all subsisted: and their toleration of such practices, however useful at first for reconciling *Heathens* to *Christianity*, seems now to be the readiest way to drive *Christians* back again to *Heathenism*.

But it is high time for me to conclude, being persuaded, if I do not flatter myself too much, that I have sufficiently made good, what I first undertook to prove; an *exact Conformity*, or *Uniformity* rather, of *Worship*, between *Popery* and *Paganism*: for since, as I have shewn above, we see the *present people of Rome* worshipping in the *same temples*; at the *same Altars*; sometimes the *same Images*; and always with the *same Ceremonies*, as the *old Romans*; they must have more *charity*, as well as *skill in distinguishing*, than I pretend to have, who can absolve them from the *same superstition and idolatry*, of which we condemn their *Pagan Ancestors*.

Thus far our learned Author, in his letter from *Rome*; which passed thro' three Editions before it received any Answer. But then a Roman Catholic Writer made an Attempt to confute it, in the Preface to a Piece published under the Title of *The Catholic Christian instructed*. And as this Piece may be fairly supposed to contain all the material objections that the Papists have to make against the *Letter*, and what they can urge in their own defence, we shall give the Substance of our Author's Reply to it; which, will bring a cause, so concerning to both Communions, to an issue before the candid Reader, who will be enabled thereby to determine upon the merits both of the Charge, and the Defence.

The Author of the *Letter* declares, That he cannot think it strange, that a man, whose avowed design and sole employment amongst us, is, to make converts to the *Romish Church*, should treat a work with some acrimony, that was published with no other view, than to blast his hopes, and obstruct his endeavours, to delude the people of this nation: but that it gives him a sensible pleasure to observe, what these Missionaries of *Rome* are forced to confess, that his little performance is a real obstacle to their designs; and that one of the first steps necessary towards advancing the *Popish* Interest in *England*, is to overthrow the credit both of the *Letter*, and its Author.

Our *Catholic* therefore, says he, in the execution of this task, sets out with a general accusation against me of *foul play*, and *dissingenuity*, and a resolution to suppress the truth; because my charge against them is grounded only, he says, "on certain ceremonies and observances of less moment, without taking notice of the substantial parts of their religion; their belief of the *Scriptures*; of the *three Creeds*, of the *Trinity*; the *Eucharist Sacrifice*, &c. which none will pretend to be derived to them from the *Pagans*."

This,

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This, our Author says, is artfully thrown out, to confound the true state of the question; and to prepossess the reader with a notion, that, instead of *Popery*, he is attacking Christianity itself, and sustaining the cause of Infidelity, not of Protestantism: but every man of sense, says he, will discern the fallacy, and observe, that it is *Popery* alone, with which I am engaged; or that System of ceremonies and doctrines, which is peculiar to the *Romish Church*, as distinguished from other Christian Churches: the source of which I have undertaken to lay open, and, by an historical deduction of facts, to trace its origin in a direct line, from *Pagan* down to *Popish Rome*.

In the farther support of this charge, says the learned Letter writer, I shall now procede to examine our Author's exceptions to it, in the order as they lie in his Preface, and vindicate all the particular proofs of it alleged in my letter, to which he has thought proper to give any answer: the chief of which, as he, the Answerer, tells us, are, "*Incense; Holy Water; Lamps and Candles; Votive offerings; Images; Chappels on the way sides and tops of Hills; Processions; Miracles* [1]." On these, says our learned Author, I shall join issue with him; and endeavour to shew, that his defence of them is not only frivolous and evasive, but tends rather to confirm, than to confute the inference, which I have drawn from them.

As to several of these articles, he makes one general Apology; that I "am mistaken, in thinking every ceremony used by the Heathens, to be Heathenish, since the greatest part were borrowed from the worship of the true God; in imitation of which, the Devil affected to have his Temples, Altars, Priests, and Sacrifices, and all other things, which were used in the true worship" This he applies to the case of *Incense, Lamps, Holy water, and Processions*; and adds, "that if I had been as well read in the Scriptures, as I would seem to be in the Heathen

" Poets,

[1] Pref. ib. p. 4.

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“ Poets, I should have found the use of all these in
“ the Temple of God, and that by God’s appoint-
“ ment [u].”

Our Author says, he shall not dispute with him about the origin of these rites; whether they were *first instituted by Moses*, or were of *prior use and antiquity among the Egyptians*. The Scriptures, says he, favour the last; which our *Spencer* strongly asserts, and their *Calmet* and *Huetius* allow: but should we grant him all, that he can infer from his argument; what will he gain by it? Were not all *those beggarly elements* wiped away by the spiritual worship of the Gospel? Were they not all annulled, on the account of *their weakness and unprofitableness*, by the more perfect revelation of *Jesus Christ* [w]? If then I should acknowledge myself to be mistaken, and recal my words; and instead of *Pagan*, call them *Jewish* ceremonies; would not the use of *Jewish rites* be abominable still in a *Christian Church*, where they are expressly abolished and prohibited by God himself?

But to pursue his argument a little farther: While the *Mosaic* worship subsisted by divine appointment in *Jerusalem*, the *Devil likewise*, as he tells us, *had Temples and Ceremonies of the same kind*, in order to draw Votaries to his Idolatrous worship: which, after the abolition of the *Jewish Service*, was carried on still with great pomp and splendor; and, above all places, in *Rome*; the principal seat of his worldly Empire. Now it is certain, that in the early times of the Gospel, the Christians of *Rome* were celebrated for their zealous adherence to the faith of Christ, as it was delivered to them by the Apostles, pure from every mixture either of *Jewish* or *Heathenish Superstition*; till after a succession of ages, as they began gradually to deviate from that Apostolic simplicity, they introduced at different times into the Church the particular ceremonies in question. Whence then
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[u] Ib. 5, 8.

[w] Galat. iv. 9. Heb. vii. 18,

can we think it probable, that they should borrow them? From the *Jewish* or the *Pagan* ritual? From a Temple, remote, despised and demolished by the *Romans* themselves; or from Temples and Altars perpetually in their View, and subsisting in their streets; in which their Ancestors and Fellow-citizens had constantly worshipped? The question can hardly admit any dispute: The humour of the people, as well as interest of a corrupted Priesthood would invite them to adopt such rites, as were native to the soil, and found upon the place, as allowed by one of their own Authors, before quoted *; and which long experience had shewn to be useful, to the acquisition both of wealth and power. Thus by the most candid construction of this Author's reasoning, we must necessarily call their ceremonies *Jewish*; or, by pushing it to its full length, shall be obliged to call them, *devilish*.

The Catholic Writer observes; that our Author begins his charge with the use of *Incense*. *Incense*, as the most notorious proof of their Paganism, and, like an artful Rhetorician, places his strongest argument in the front [x]. Yet he knows, says our learned Author, that I have assigned a different reason, for offering that the first: because it is the first thing, that strikes the senses, and surprises a stranger, upon his entrance into their Churches. But it shall be my strongest proof, if he will have it so, since he has brought nothing, I am sure, to weaken the force of it. He tells us, that there was an Altar of *Incense* in the Temple of *Jerusalem*; and is surprised therefore, how I can call it *Heathenish*: Yet it is evident, from the nature of that institution, that it was never designed to be perpetual; and that, during its continuance, God would never have approved any other Altar, either in *Jerusalem*, or any-where else. But let him answer directly, continues our Author, to this

* Aringhus. See p. 52.

[x] Pref. p. 5.

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this plain question; Was there ever a temple in the world not strictly *Heathenish*, in which there were several Altars, all smoking with incense, within one view, and at one and the same time? It is certain, that he must answer in the Negative. Yet it is as certain, that there were many such Temples in *Pagan Rome*; and are as many still in *Christian Rome*: and since there never was an example of it, but what was *Paganish*, before the times of *Popery*, how is it possible, that it could be derived to them from any other source? or when we see so exact a resemblance in the copy, how can there be any doubt about the *original*?

What he alleges therefore in favour of *incense*, is nothing to the purpose; "that it was used in the Jewish, and is of great antiquity in the Christian Church; and that it is mentioned with honour in the scriptures;" which frequently compare it to Prayer, and speak of its sweet odors ascending up to God, &c. which figurative expressions, he says, "would never have been borrowed by the sacred Penmen from Heathenish superstition [y]:" as if such allusions were less proper, or the thing itself less sweet, for its being applied to the purposes of idolatry; as it constantly was, in the times even of the same Penmen, and according to their own accounts, on the Altars of Baal, and the other Heathen Idols. And when *Jeremiah* rebukes the people of Judah for burning incense to the Queen of heaven [z], one can hardly help imagining, that he is prophetically pointing out the worship now paid to the Virgin; to whom they actually burn incense at this day under that very title [a].

But if it be a just ground for retaining a practice in the Christian Church, because it was enjoined to the Jews; what will our Catholic say for those usages,

[y] Pref. p. 6.

[z] Jerem. xlv. 17.

[a] Vid. Offic. Beatæ Virg. Salve Regina; Ave Regina cælorum; Domina Angelorum, &c.

usages, which were actually prohibited to the *Jews*, and never practised by any, but by the *Heathens* and the *Papists*?—All the *Egyptian Priests*, as *Herodotus* informs us, “had their heads shaved and “kept continually bald [b].” Thus the *Tonsure*. Emperor, *Commodus*, that he might be admitted into that order, “got himself shaved, and carried the God *Anubis* in procession [c]. And it was on this account most probably, that the *Jewish Priests* were commanded, “not to shave their heads, nor to “make any baldness upon them [d].” Yet this *pagan rasure*, or *tonsure*, as they chuse to call it, on the crown of the head, has long been the distinguishing mark of the *Romish Priesthood*. It was on the same account, we may imagine, that the *Jewish Priests* “were forbidden to make any cuttings in their “flesh [e];” since that likewise was the common practice of certain *Priests and Devotees among the Heathens*, in order to acquire the fame of a more exalted sanctity. Yet the same discipline, as I have shewn in my *Letter*, is constantly practised at *Rome*, in some of their solemn seasons and processions, in imitation of those *Pagan Enthusiasts*: as if they searched the *Scriptures*, to learn, not so much what was enjoined by the true religion, as what had been useful at any time in a false one, to delude the multitude, and support an imposture.

Our Author makes the same apology for *Holy-water*, that he has just made for *Holy-water*; that, in the “*Mosaic law*, we find the mention of a water sanctified “for religious uses;” which cannot therefore be called *Heathenish*; and that I might, with as good a grace,

[b] Herodot. l. 2. 36.

Qui grege linigero circumdatus, & grege calvo. Juv. 6. 33.

[c] Lamprid. in Commod. 9.

[d] Levitic. xxi. 5. Ezech. xlv. 20.

[e] Levitic. xix. 28. xxi. 5.

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grace, have proved *the Sacrament of Baptism to be Heathenish*, as their use of *Holy-water* [f].

It is surprising, to hear such a defence from any one, who calls himself a Christian. *The Sacrament of Baptism* was ordained by *Christ*, in the most solemn manner, and for the most solemn purpose, as the essential rite of our initiation into his Church; while there is not the least hint in any part of the Gospel, that *any other water* was either necessary, or proper, or useful in any degree to the washing away of sin. But our Author's zeal seems to have carried him beyond his prudence; and he forgets what ground he is treading, if he fancies, that he can defend, in this protestant country, what he might affirm with applause in a *popish*; that *the institutions of Christ* stand upon no better foundation, than *the injunctions of the Pope*, or at least of the *Popish Church*.

I have mentioned one use of their *Holy-Benedicti- water*, in a Festival at *Rome*, called *the on of horses. Benediction of horses*, which seems to perplex him. He dares not deny the fact, yet labours to render it suspected; and declares, "that though he had spent the greatest part of his life abroad, he had never seen or heard of any such thing [g]." But whatever he thinks, or would seem rather to think, of it, I know the thing to be true from the evidence of my own eyes: yet as I had no desire, that the reader should take my bare word for that, or any other fact in the Letter, I took care to add such testimonies of it, as every one will allow to be authentic.

But if he really be a stranger to so extraordinary a practice, he must be an improper advocate of a cause, of which he owns himself to be ignorant. The learned *Mabillon*, as I have observed, intimates his surprize at this, as well as many other parts of their worship, which he had never seen, till he travelled into *Italy*; but, instead of defending, chuses
either

[f] Pref. p. 7.

[g] Ibid.

ther to drop them in silence, or to give them up as superstitious: which might have been the case also of our *Catholic*, if he had been better informed of the facts, which he has undertaken to vindicate.

But if these men of learning, and teachers of Religion, know so little of what is done at *Rome*, how easy must it be, to impose upon the poor *Catholics* in *England*, and keep them in the dark, as to the more exceptionable parts of their worship, which are openly avowed and practised abroad, to the scandal of all the candid and moderate even of their own communion!

But though our *Catholic* seems so much ashamed at present of *this Benediction of horses, in their Church*, I can give him such light into the origin of it, as will make him proud of it probably for the future; from a story, that I have observed in *St. Jerom*; which shews it to be grounded on a miracle, and derived from a Saint: I mean *St. Hilarion*; the founder of the *Monastic orders in Syria and Palestine* [b].

The story is this: "A Citizen of *Gaza*, a Christian, who kept a Stable of running horses for the *Circensian games*, was always beaten by his Antagonist, an Idolater, the master of a rival stable. For the Idolater, by the help of certain charms, and diabolical imprecations, constantly damped the spirits of the Christian's horses, and added courage to his own. The Christian, therefore, in despair, applied himself to *St. Hilarion*, and implored his assistance: but the Saint was unwilling to enter into an affair so frivolous and profane; till the Christian urging it as a necessary defence against these adversaries of God, whose insults were levelled not so much at him, as at the Church of Christ; and his intreaties being seconded by the Monks, who were present; the Saint ordered his earthen jugg, out of which he used to drink, to be filled with water, and delivered to the man: who presently sprinkled his Stable,

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" his

[b] Hieron. Op. T. 4. par. 2. p. 78. Ed. Ben.

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“ his Horses, his Charioteers, his Chariot, and the
 “ very boundaries of the course with it. Upon this,
 “ the whole City was in wondrous expectation: *the*
 “ Idolaters derided what the Christian was doing;
 “ while *the Christians* took courage, and assured
 “ themselves of victory; till the signal being given
 “ for the race, the Christian’s horses seemed to fly,
 “ whilst the Idolater’s were labouring behind, and
 “ left quite out of sight; so that *the Pagans* them-
 “ selves were forced to cry out, *that their God Marnas*
 “ *was conquered at last by Christ* [i].” Thus this me-
 morable Function, borrowed originally from the *Pa-*
gan Sprinklers of the Circensian games, appears to be as
 antient almost in the Church as *Monkery* itself, and
 one of the first inventions, for which *Popery* stands
 indebted to that religious institution.

As to the Lamps and Candles, which
Lamps and are constantly burning before the Altars
candles. of their Saints, he tells us once more;

“ That though the Devil had procured
 “ them to be set up in his Temples, yet they were
 “ appointed originally by God for the service of his
 “ Tabernacle; and were not therefore borrowed from
 “ the Heathenish, but the *Mosaic* worship [k].” To
 which I need not repeat, what I have already said on
 the foregoing articles. I had deduced the origin of
 these lamps from *Egypt*, upon the authority of
Clemens Alexandrinus: but he declares, that *Clemens*
says no such thing; yet does not think fit to tell us,
 what it is that he has said, nor how near it ap-
 proaches to the interpretation which I have given of
 it. *Clemens* expressly ascribes the invention of lamps
 to the *Egyptians*, in which he is followed by *Eusebius*;
 and since lamps were used in all the *Pagan Temples*
 from the earliest times, of which we have any no-
 tice, I take it for a necessary consequence, that the
Egyptians were the first, who made use of them
 likewise

[i] Ibid. p. 80.

[k] Pref. p. 8.

likewise in their Temples. But let that be as it will, this at least is certain, that the use of them in Christian Churches was condemned by many of the *primitive Bishops and Presbyters*, as superstitious and Heathenish. But all these our *Catholic* makes no scruple to brand with the title of *Heretics* [1]; tho' many of them, perhaps, might more truly be called, *the Protestants of the primitive Church*; particularly *Vigilantius*; who, by all that I have been able to observe about him, incurred the Charge of *Heresy* for no other crime, than that of writing against "Monk-ery; the Celibacy of the Clergy; praying for the dead; worshipping the reliques of Martyrs; and lighting up candles to them, after the manner of the Pagans [m]." But *St. Jerom* has given the most rational definition of *Heresy*, where he says; "That those who interpret Scripture to any sense, repugnant to that of the Holy Spirit, though they should never withdraw themselves from the Church, yet may be justly called Heretics [n]." By which Criterion, *the Romish Church* will be found much more *Heretical*, than any of those, who, either in antient or modern times, have separated themselves from its communion on the account of its doctrines.

My next instance of their *Paganism* is, the number of their *Donaria* or *Votive offerings*, hanging around the *Altars of their Saints*: where our Author, having nothing to allege from Scripture, nor any example from antiquity, but what is purely *Heathenish*, is forced to change his tone, and to declare, "That things innocent in themselves cannot be rendered unlawful, for having been abused by the Heathens; and that it cannot be disagreeable to the true God, that those, who believe themselves, to have received

Votive offerings.

G 2

"favours

[1] Pref. p. 13.

[m] Hieron. Oper. T. 4. part 2. p. 275, 282. edit. Benedict. It. Cave's Hist. Liter. par. 1.

[n] Hieron. ibid. par. 1. p. 302.

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“ favours from him by the prayers of his Saints,
 “ should make a public acknowledgment of it [o].”
 But can a practice be called innocent, which is a
 confessed copy of paganish Superstition? which tends
 to weaken our dependence on God, and to place it on
 those, who are not probably in a condition, either *to*
hear, or to help us? which imprints the same vene-
 ration for *the Christian Saints*, that the *Pagans* paid
 to their *subordinate Deities*; and transfers the honour
 due to God, to the Altars of departed mortals? Such
 a worship, I say, so far from being innocent, must
 necessarily be condemned by all unprejudiced men,
 as profane and idolatrous; as it will more evidently
 appear to be, from our consideration of the next ar-
 ticle, their *worship of Images*.

On this head, our Catholic pours out
Image- all his rage against me; charges me with
worship. “ slander and misrepresentation, and no-
 “ torious untruths; *says* that I am no
 “ better friend to Christianity, than to Popery; that
 “ I imitate the antient Heretics, and copy my argu-
 “ ments from the Apostate *Julian* [p]:” by which he
 shews, in what manner he would silence me, if he
 had me under his discipline: but I can easily forgive
 his railing, while I find myself out of his power;
 and rejoice, that we live in a country, where he can
 use a liberty, which no *Popish* Government would in-
 dulse to a Protestant. The ground of all this clamour,
 is, my treating their *Image-worship, as Idolatrous*:
 yet he does not pretend to contradict my facts, but
 the inference only, that I draw from them; and
 since he cannot overthrow my premises, is the more
 enraged at my conclusion.

I had defined *Idols*, upon the authority of St. *Jerom*,
 to be *Images of the dead*: where he is simple enough
 to imagine, that I included in my definition, *all*
images and pictures whatsoever of the dead; and calls it
 there-

[o] Pref. p. 9.

[p] Pref. p. 13.

therefore a *brat of my own, which I falsely father upon St. Jerom* [g]. Yet every man must see, that I could mean no other *images*, but such, as I was there treating of; such, as had *Temples, Altars*, and a *religious worship*, instituted to them; for such are all the *Images* of the *Popish Church*; and of all such *Images of the dead*, I shall affirm again with *St. Jerom*, that they are true and proper *Idols*.

It is not my present design to enter into a formal discussion of the nature of Idolatry; which, according to every sense of it, as our Divines have fully demonstrated, is now exercised in *Popish Rome*, upon the very same principles, on which it was formerly practised in *Pagan Rome*. The purpose of my *Letter* is, to illustrate this argument by the more sensible evidence of fact; and, in spite of the cavils and evasive distinctions of their Schools, to shew *their worship of Images, or of Saints*, call it which they will, to be properly and actually idolatrous. But our Author defines *Idols* "to be such Images only, as are set up for
" Gods, and honoured as such; or in which some
" divinity or power is believed to reside by their
" worshippers; who accordingly offer prayers and
" sacrifice to them, and put their trust in them [r]." Such, says the Answerer, *were the Idols of the Gentiles*; and such, says our Author, I shall venture to say, are *the Idols of the Papists*. For what else can we say of those *miraculous Images*, as they are called, in every great Town of *Italy*, but that some *Divinity or Power* is universally believed to reside in them? Are not all their people persuaded, and do not all their books testify, that these Images have sometimes *moved themselves* from one place to another; have *wept, talked, and wrought many miracles*? And does not this necessarily imply an *extraordinary power residing in them*? In the high street of *Loretto*, which leads to *the Holy House*, the shops are filled with *Beads*,

[g] Pref. p. 10.

[r] Pref. p. 11.

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Crucifixes, Agnus's Dei, and all the trinkets of *Popish* manufacture; where I observed *printed certificates*, or testimonials, affixed to each shop, declaring all their toys to have been *touched by the blessed Image*: which certificates are provided for no other purpose, but to humour the general persuasion, both of the buyer and the seller, that *some virtue* is communicated by that touch, from a *power residing in the Image*.

In one of the Churches of *Lucca*, they shew an Image of *the Virgin with the child Jesus* in her arms, of which they relate this Story; "That a blaspheming Gamester, in rage and despair, took up a stone, and threw it at the Infant; but the Virgin, to preserve him from the blow, which was levelled at his head, shifted him instantly from her right arm into the left, in which he is now held; while the blasphemer was swallowed up by the earth upon the spot; where the hole, which they declare to be unfathomable, is still kept open, and inclosed only with a grate, just before the Altar of the Image. The Virgin however received the blow upon her shoulder, whence the blood presently issued, which is preserved in a Crystal, and produced, with the greatest ceremony, by the Priest in his vestments, with tapers lighted, while all the company kiss the sacred relique on their knees [s]." Now does not the attestation of this miracle naturally tend to persuade people, that there is an *actual power residing in the Image*, which can defend itself from injuries, and inflict vengeance on all, who dare to insult it?

One of the most celebrated *Images in Italy* is that of *St. Dominic, of Surriano in Calabria*, which, as their histories testify, was brought down from heaven about two centuries ago, by *the Virgin Mary* in person, accompanied by *Mary Magdalene* and *St. Catharine*. Before this glorious picture, as they affirm, "great numbers of the dead have been restored to life," and

[s] See Mr. *Wright's Travels at Lucca*,

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“ and hundreds from the agonies of death; the
 “ dumb, the blind, the deaf, the lame, have been
 “ cured, and all sorts of diseases and mortal wounds
 “ miraculously healed:” all which facts are attested
 by public Notaries; and confirmed by the relations
 of Cardinals, Prelates, Generals and Priors of that
 Order; and the certainty of them so generally believed,
 that from the 9th of *July* to the 9th of *August*, the
 anniversary Festival of the Saint, they have always
 counted *above an hundred thousand Pilgrims*, and many
 of them of the highest quality, who come from dif-
 ferent parts of *Europe*, to pay their devotions, and
 make their offerings, to this picture [t]

All their Apologists indeed declare, what our Ca-
 tholic also says on this head, “ That they do not
 “ ascribe these miracles to any power in the Image
 “ itself, but to the power of God, who is moved to
 “ work them by the prayers and intercession of his
 “ Saints, for the benefit of those, who have sought
 “ that intercession before their pictures or images;
 “ and in order to bear testimony to the faith and
 “ practice of the Church in this particular article
 “ [u].” But how can we think it possible, that the
 Deity can be moved to exert his power so wonder-
 fully for the confirmation of such ridiculous stories,
of pictures and statues sent down from heaven; which
 while they blasphemously impute to the workman-
 ship of *Saints or Angels, or of God himself* [w], are
 yet always so rudely and contemptibly performed,
 that a moderate artist on earth would be ashamed to
 call them his own? Or is it at all credible, that the
 Saints in heaven should be as busy and ambitious, as
 their

[t] La vie de St. Dominic. p. 599. 4to. à Paris, 1647. it. p.
 602. See also our Author in his Prefatory Discourse to the
 Eighth Edition of his Letter, of which we are giving the Sub-
 stance, p. xxxi. for a very suitable Passage to the same Purpose,
 which he quotes from Aringhus, in his Rom. Subterr. Tom.
 2. p. 464. §. 13.

[u] Cathol. Christ. p. 251.

[w] Ἰμαγινὲν Θεοτεκτον. Evagr.

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their votaries are on earth, to advance the peculiar honours of their several altars, by their continual intercessions at the throne of grace? Or that their whole care above, if they really have any which reaches to things below, should be employed, not for the *general* advancement of religion and piety among men, but of *their own private* glory and worship, in preference to all their *competitors*? No; the absurdity of such notions and practices makes it necessary to believe, that they are all occasionally forged for the support of some lucrative scheme; or to revive the expiring credit of some favourite superstition, which had been found highly beneficial to the contrivers of such forgeries. For the very effect, of which they boast, as a proof of the miracle, betrays the fraud; and *the multitude of pilgrims and offerings* to which they appeal, instead of demonstrating the truth of the fact, does but expose the real ground of the imposture.

But to return to my Antagonist: If we should ask him once more, whether there ever was a Temple in the world, not purely heathenish, in which there were *any Images, erected on altars*, for the purpose of any religious worship whatsoever; he must be obliged to answer in the negative. He would be forced likewise to confess, that there were many such Temples in *Pagan Rome*, and particularly the *Pantheon*, which remains still in *Christian Rome*; on whose numerous altars as there formerly stood the *Images* of as many *Pagan Divi* or *Idols*, so there are now standing the *Images* of as many *Popish Divi* or *Saints*; to whom the *present Romans* pay their vows, and offer prayers, as their inclinations severally lead them to *this* or *that* particular Altar: and no man will pretend to say, that there is not the *greatest conformity* between the present and the antient Temple; or that it would not be difficult to furnish out a private room more exactly to the taste of the *old Romans*, than this *Popish Church* stands

stands now adorned with all the furniture of their old Paganism.

We are informed by *Plato*, that there were *Images* in the Temples of *Egypt* from the earliest antiquity [x]: And it appears evidently from Scripture, that they subsisted there, as well as in *Palestine*, before the time of *Moses*. The strict prohibition of them therefore to the *Jews*, while several other rites of the *Heathens* were indulged to them, in condescension to their peculiar circumstances, and carnal affections, carries a strong intimation, that *Images* are of all things the most dangerous to true religion; as tending naturally to corrupt it, by introducing Superstition and Idolatry into the worship of God. [*The Sight whereof inticeth Fools to lust after them, says the Author of the Book of Wisdom, c. xv. ver. 5. and so they desire the Form of a dead Image, an Image spotted with divers Colours, the Painter's fruitless labour, that hath no Breath; the mischievous Invention of Men to deceive us. Both they that made them, says he, they that desire them, and they that worship them, are Lovers of evil Things, and are worthy to have such Things to trust upon.*]

What follows is no less to the Purpose on this subject, exposing both the Idol-makers and Idolaters; For the Potter tempering soft earth fashioneth every vessel with much labour for our service: yea, of the same clay he maketh both the vessels that serve for clean uses, and likewise also all such as serve to the contrary; but what is the use of either sort, the Potter himself is the judge: and, employing his labours lewdly, he maketh a vain god of the same clay, even he which a little before was made of earth himself, and within a little while after returneth to the same out of the which he was taken; when his life which was lent him shall be demanded: notwithstanding his care is, not that he shall have much labour, nor that his life is short; but striveth to excel Gold.

“smiths

[x] Plat. de Legib. l. 2. p. 656. Max. Tyr. Diss. 38.

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*Smiths and Silversmiths, and endeavoureth to do like the workers in brass, and counteth it his glory to make counterfeit things. His Heart is ashes, his hope is more vile than earth, and his life of less value than clay: forasmuch as he knew not his Maker, and him that inspireth into him an active Soul, and breathing in a living Spirit: But they counted our life a pastime, and our time here a market for gain: for, say they, we must be getting every way, though it be by evil means: for this man that of earthly matter maketh bricke vessels, and graven images, knoweth himself to offend above all others; and all the enemies of thy people, that hold them in subjection, are most foolish, and are more miserable than very babes: for they counted all the idols of the Heathens to be gods, which neither have the use of eyes to see, nor noses to draw breath, nor ears to hear, nor fingers of hands, to handle; and, as for their feet, they are slow to go: for man made them, and he that borrowed his own spirit fashioned them, but no man can make a god like unto himself; for, being mortal, he worketh a dead thing with wicked hands: for he himself is better than the things which he worshippeth; whereas he lived once, but they never, as may be said "of some of the pretended Saints of the Roman Church. " And this was an occasion (c. xiv. 21.) "to deceive the World: For Men, serving either Calamity or Tyranny, did ascribe unto Stones and "Stocks, the incommunicable Name.—For the worshipping of Idols, not to be named, (ver. 27.) is "the Beginning, the Cause, and the End of all Evil." But to return:] The *Christian Emperors*, as I have already intimated, strictly prohibited their *Pagan Subjects* "to light up candles, offer incense, or hang up "garlands to senseless Images:" for these were then reckoned the notorious acts of genuine *Paganism*: yet we now see all these very acts performed every day in *Popish countries to the Images of the Popish Saints*. In a word, since there never was an Image in the Temple of the true God in any age of the world, yet*

yet a perpetual use of them in all the Temples of the *Heathens*, it is in vain to dispute about their origin; the thing is evident to a demonstration; they must necessarily be derived to *the present Romans*, from those, who always *used*, and not from those, who always *detested* them; that is, from their *Pagan*, not their *Christian* Ancestors. They may quibble therefore as long as they please; and talk of their *Decrees* and *Canons*, contrived to amuse the public, and elude the arguments of Protestants, by subtle and specious distinctions; while every Traveller, who sees what passes at the Shrine of any *celebrated Saint*, or *miraculous Image* in Ita'y, will be convinced by ocular demonstration, that their people are *trained, instructed*, and *encouraged* to believe, that there *is a divinity* or *power residing in those Images*, and that they actually *offer up prayers and put their trust* in them.

For if there is no such belief amongst them, as this Catholic affirms, for what purpose do they expose *those Images* so solemnly, and carry them about *processionally*, on all occasions of public distress? Is there any charm in a block of wood or stone, to produce rain, or avert a pestilence? Or, can *senseless Images* have any influence towards moving the Will of God? No; their Priests are not so silly as to imagine it: the sole end of producing them is, not to move *God*, but the *populace*; to persuade the deluded multitude, that there *is a power in the Image*, that can draw down blessings upon them from Heaven: a doctrine, that repays all their pains of inculcating it, by a perpetual supply of wealth to the treasury of the Church. This therefore, as it appears from undeniable facts, is the universal belief of *all Popish Countries*; grounded, as they all assert, on the evidence of perpetual miracles, wrought by the particular agency of these *sacred Images*, of which I could produce innumerable instances from their own books.

In a Collegiate Church of Regular Canons, called *St. Mary of Impruneta*, about six miles from *Florence*,
2
there

there is a *miraculous picture of the Virgin Mary*, painted by *St. Luke*, and held in the greatest veneration through all *Tuscany*: which, as oft as that State happens to be visited by any calamity, or involved in any peculiar danger, is sure to be brought out, and carried in procession through the streets of *Florence*; attended by the Prince himself, with all the Nobility, Magistrates and Clergy; where it has never failed to afford them present relief in their greatest difficulties. In testimony of which they produce authentic acts and records, confirmed by public Inscriptions, setting forth all the particular benefits miraculously obtained from each procession, and the several offerings made on that account to the *Sacred Image*, for many centuries past, down to these very times: from the notoriety of which facts it became a proverb over *Italy*, that *the Florentines had got a Madonna, which did for them, whatever they pleased* [y].

Among the numerous Inscriptions of this sort, there is one in the Church of *Impruneta*, to this effect; "That the sacred Image being carried with solemn pomp into *Florence*, when it was visited by a pestilence for three years successively, and received with pious zeal by the great Duke, *Ferdinand II.* and the whole body of the people, who came out to meet it, and having marched about the City for three days in procession, the fierceness of the pestilence began miraculously to abate, and soon after intirely ceased. Upon which the Magistrates of health, by a general vow of the Citizens, made an offering of ten thousand ducats of gold, to be employed in providing portions for twenty young women of *Impruneta* to be disposed of annually in marriage; and placed that Inscription as a Monument of so signal a benefit, A. D. 1633 [z]."

During

[y] Vid. *Memorie Istoriche della Miracolosa Immagine*, &c. in *Firen.* 1714. 4to. p. 85.

[z] Ibid. p. 202.

During the time of these processions, they always inscribe certain hymns, or prayers, or elogiums of the Virgin, over the doors and other conspicuous places of each Church, where the Image reposes itself for any time; in order to raise the devotion of the people towards the sacred object before them. In a procession made *A. D.* 1711, the following Inscription was placed over the principal gate of one of their great Churches:—"The Gate of celestial benefit. The Gate of Salvation. Look up to the Virgin Herself. Pass in to me, all ye, who desire me. Whosoever shall find me, will find life, and draw salvation from the Lord. For there is no one, who can be saved, O most Holy Virgin, but through Thee. There is no one who can be delivered from evils, but through Thee. There is no one, from whom we can obtain mercy, but through Thee."--In the conclusion are these expressions:—"Mary indeed opens the bosom of her mercy to all; so that the whole Universe receives out of her fulness: the Captive, redemption; the Sick, a cure; the Sad, comfort; the Sinner, pardon; the Just, grace; the Angel, joy; the whole Trinity, glory [*a*]."

Now what can we say of a devotion so extravagant and blasphemous, but that it is a revival of the old Heresy of the Collyridians; maintained by a sect of silly women; who fell into their foolish error or madness, as Epiphanius calls it, through an excess of zeal towards the blessed Virgin, whom they resolved to advance into a Goddess, and to introduce the worship of Her as such into the Christian Church [*b*]?

I cannot dismiss the story of *this wonderful picture*, without giving the reader some account of its origin, as it is delivered by their writers, not grounded, as they say, on vulgar fame, but on public records, and

H

hi-

[*a*] Ibid. 234.

[*b*] Epiph. adv. Hær. vol. I. p. 1058. Edit. Par. 1622. Vid. etiam p. 1054.

histories, confirmed by a perpetual series of miracles.
 —“ When the Inhabitants of *Impruneta* had resolved
 “ to build a Church to the Virgin, and were dig-
 “ ging the foundations of it with great zeal, on a spot
 “ marked out to them by heaven; one of the la-
 “ bourers happened to strike his pickax against some-
 “ thing under ground, from which there issued pre-
 “ sently a complaining voice or groan. The work-
 “ men, being greatly amazed, put a stop to their
 “ work for a while; but, having recovered their spirits
 “ after some pause, they ventured to open the place,
 “ from which the voice came, and found the mira-
 “ culous Image [c].”

This calls to my mind a *Pagan* Story, of the same stamp, and in the same country, preserved to us by *Cicero*, concerning the origin of Divination: “ That
 “ a man being at plough in a certain field of *Etruria*,
 “ and happening to strike his plough somewhat
 “ deeper than ordinary, there started up before him
 “ out of the furrow, a Deity, whom they called
 “ *Tages*. The ploughman, terrified by so strange an
 “ apparition, made such an outcry, that he alarmed
 “ all his neighbours, and in a short time drew the
 “ whole country around him; to whom the God,
 “ in the hearing of them all, explained the whole art
 “ and mystery of divination: which all their writers and
 “ records affirmed to be the genuine origin of that
 “ discipline, for which the old *Tuscans* were after-
 “ wards so famous.” Now these two stories, forged
 at different times in the same country, and for the
 same end of supporting an idolatrous worship, bear
 such a resemblance to each other, that every one will
 see the one to have been a bungling imitation of the
 other; and we may say of the *Popish* Madonna, what
Cicero says of the *Pagan* *Tages*, “ That none can be
 “ so silly as to believe, that a God was ever dug out
 “ of the ground; and that an attempt to confute
 “ such

[c] Vide *Memorie Istoriche della Miracolosa Immagine*,
 in *Firen.* 1714. 4to. p. 53. &c.

"such stories would be as silly, as to believe them
 " [d]." My design therefore in collecting them was,
 not so much to expose the folly of them to my
Protestant readers, as to admonish our *Papists*, by
 unquestionable facts and instances, drawn from the
 present practice of *Rome*, into what a labyrinth of folly
 and impiety their principles will naturally lead them,
 when they are pushed to their full length, and ex-
 erted without reserve or restraint; and to lay before
 them the forgeries and impostures which are prac-
 tised in their Church, to support the absurd doc-
 trines, which she imposes as the necessary terms of
 Catholic communion.

Their constant method of recurring to
different Saints in their different ex- *Provincial*
 gencies, is nothing else, as many writers *saints*.
 have observed, but an exact copy of the
Pagan superstition, grounded on a popular belief,
 that their Saints, like the old Dæmons, have each
 their *distinct provinces*, or *prefectures* assigned to them;
 some over particular countries, cities, societies, and
 even the different *trades* of men; others over the se-
 veral *diseases* of the body, or the mind; others over
 the winds, the rain, and various fruits of the earth
 [e]. So that God's rebuke to the Apostatizing *Jews*,
 is full as applicable to the *Papists*, for committing
whoredoms with their Idols, and saying, "I will go
 " after my lovers, who give me my bread and my
 " water; my wooll and my flax; mine oil and my
 " drink ---for they did not know, that I gave them
 " their corn and wine and oil, and multiplied their
 " silver and gold, which they prepared for Baal [f]."

Our Catholic proceeds to affirm, "That
 " all the devotion paid to their Saints *Devotion*
 " extends no farther, than to desire their *to saints*."

H 2

" pray-

[d] Cic. de Divin. 2. 23.

[e] Orig. con. Cels. 8. p. 399. See Conformity of ant. and
 mod. ceremon. p. 112. &c.

[f] Hosea ii. 5, 7.

“ prayers; and that the pictures and images of them,
 “ which we see in their Churches, are no more than
 “ mere memorials, designed to express the esteem,
 “ which they retain for the persons so represented;
 “ or as helps to raise their affections to heavenly
 “ things; and that every child amongst them knows
 “ this to be true [g].” Yet I have demonstrated,
 from their public Inscriptions, as well as the explicit
 testimonies of their writers, that those Images are
 placed by them in their Churches, as the proper ob-
 jects of *religious adoration*; and that they ascribe to
 their *Divi*, or *Saints*, who are represented by them,
 the very same titles, powers and attributes, which
 the *Heathens* ascribed to *their Deities*; invoking
 them as *Tutelary Divinities*; “ as presiding over their
 “ Temples, and the affairs of men, as most power-
 “ ful, invincible, and always ready to help and re-
 “ lieve their votaries [h].” All which is confirmed
 by the constant stile of their prayers, and the express
 language of their *Liturgies*, *Missals* and *Breviaries*,
 set forth at *Rome* by public authority: in which the
Virgin is called, *the mother of mercy*, *Hope of the*
world, *the only trust of Sinners*; and the *Saints* ad-
 dressed to under the titles of *Intercessors*, *Protectors*
 and *Dispensers of Grace*. *Maldonatus* calls it “ an im-
 “ pious and silly error of the Protestants, to think
 “ that no religious worship is due to any, but to
 “ God.” And some of *their expurgatory Indexes* go
 so far, as to expunge all those passages of *the Primi-*
tive Fathers, which teach, *that creatures ought not to*
be adored [i].

The Abbot de Marolles relates a conversation, in
 which he was once engaged with a *Capuchin*, who
 had

[g] Pref. p. 9, 10, 12.

[h] See Letter, p. 29.

[i] *Salve Regina; Mater misericordiae, vita, dulcedo, &
 spes nostra, salve. Ad Te clamamus exules filii Evæ, &c.*
 Offic. Beat. Virg. Maldonat. in Mat. v. 35. Index Expurgat.
 Madrid, 1612.

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had been employed in several missions, and a celebrated Preacher of *France*, in the presence of an *Hugonot* Gentleman; for whose sake the Abbot took occasion to speak of *Images* in the same moderate strain, in which our Catholic thinks fit to treat them in his present address to Protestants; "That they were placed in their Churches, not for the people to adore, or put their trust in them, but to edify their senses, by the representation of holy things. But the *Abbot's* discourse gave offence both to the *Frier* and the *Preacher*; they insisted on an higher degree of veneration; urged the stories of their *miraculous Images*, and the extraordinary devotion that was paid by the Pope, the Bishops, and the whole Church, to some of them, which had been known to speak, or were brought down from heaven, or made by the hands of Apostles and Angels; or had been consecrated on the account of some particular *Virtues*, and were carried for that reason in processions, and worshipped on Altars, as well as the sacred reliques; whose miracles could not be contested by any, but *obstinate Heretics*, who would sooner renounce the testimony of their senses, than be convinced of their errors. In short, the *Capuchin* declared, that the authority of the Church was the sole rule of faith; and that to resist it, was a manifest rebellion, and worthy of the last punishment [k]." And this opinion, after all, maintained by the *Frier*, is the genuine notion of *Image-worship*, which prevails at this day in the *Romish Church*, and especially in *Italy*, as I have fully demonstrated by the facts above recited.

I have said in my *Letter*, "That several of the antient Heroes were more worthy of veneration, than some of the modern Saints, who have disposed them of their Shrines; and that I should sooner pay divine honours to

The author's veneration for the genuine saints and martyrs.

"the

H 3

[k] *Memoires de M. de Marolles, par. 1. p. 146.*

“ the Founders of Empires than to the Founders of “ Monasteries.” This our Author aggravates into a heavy charge against me; as if I were offended, to see *the Heathen Temples converted into Christian Churches*, and had actually preferred the *Pagan Deities before the Martyrs of Christ* [l]. Where, according to his custom, he either widely mistakes, or wilfully misrepresents, my meaning; for as to the *genuine Saints and Martyrs of the Christian Church*, that is, all those, who, in past ages, have lived agreeably to the rules of the Gospel, or died in the defence of it, I reverence them as highly, as they ought to be revered by any Christian; yet shall never be induced to worship them: I consider them as illustrious proofs of the excellence of the Christian doctrine, and shining examples of piety and fortitude to all succeeding ages. But as for *the Popish Saints*, I believe several of them to be wholly fictitious; many more to have spent their lives contemptibly; and some of them even wickedly. And out of these three Classes, let our Author chuse where he will; out of the *fictitious*, the *contemptible*, or the *wicked*: I shall venture to affirm once more, that I would sooner worship *Romulus*, or *Antonine*, than any of them: sooner pay my devotion to the *Founders*, than to the *Disturbers* of kingdoms; sooner to the *Benefactors*, than to the *Persecutors* of mankind; and this is the whole, that I have ever meant.

But the Answerer calls it a notorious *Fictitious* falsehood to say, “ That many of their *Saints* were never heard of but in

“ their Legends; or had no other merit “ but of throwing kingdoms into convulsions, for “ the sake of some gainful imposture [m].” Yet I have produced several instances of the first sort, which every reasonable man must think decisive; in the case of *Evodia*, *St. Viar*, *Amphibolus*, *Veronica*: but

[l] Pref. p. 12, 13.

[m] Pref. p. 14.

but *no such Saints*, he says, *were ever honoured in their Church*: by which he means nothing more, as he himself explains it, than, that they never were *formally canonized, and entered into the Roman Martyrology* [n]: which is nothing to the purpose; since, as I have shewn from unquestionable authority, they were all honoured with *Altars and Images, and openly worshipped in Catholic Countries, as Saints and Martyrs*; and that *Veronica* in particular, though the name only of a *picture*, was advanced into a *person*, by the Authority of *Pope Urban*; and placed as such upon an Altar, in the face of all Christendom, in *St. Peter's at Rome* [o]. Yet all men, who know any thing of History, either sacred or profane, must necessarily be convinced, that the whole story, not only of the *Saint*, but of the *picture* also, which they expose on certain Festivals with the greatest pomp, and for the original of which different Cities contend, is a mere cheat and forgery.

It is a thing confessed, and lamented by the gravest of their own Communion, that the names and worship of *many pretended Saints*, who never had a real existence, had been fraudulently imposed upon the Church. In the *Catacombs of Rome*, which, in the times of Heathenism, was the burial-place of the slaves, and poorer Citizens, and where the bones of *Pagans* and *Christians* lie jumbled promiscuously together, if they happen to find a *little phial, or piece of glass tinged with red*, at the mouth of any particular hole, they take it presently, as the learned *Montfaucon* informs us, for a certain proof of *Martyrdom*; and by the help of the next inscription, that they can pick up from some neighbouring Grave-stone, presently create a *new Saint and Martyr to the Popish Church*. *Mabillon*, as I have observed, wishes, "that they would be more scrupulous on this head; and not forge so many fabulous stories of Saints, with-

" out

[n] Pref. p. 14, 15.

[o] See Letter, p. 27.

“out any certain name; nor impose Paganish inscriptions for Christian, upon the Church [p].”

Our Catholic himself, in this very work, where he is labouring to give the most specious turn to every part of their worship, is forced to allow such a confusion and jumble among the *Martyrs* and their *reliques*, as approaches very nearly to what I am now affirming: he says, “That many of their Saints having borne the same name, it easily happens, that the reliques, which belong to one, are attributed to another; and that there are many antient Martyrs, whose names at present are unknown: yet whose reliques have all along been honoured in the Church; and that it was easy for the ignorance of some, or the vanity of others, to attribute to them the names of other Saints [q].” *The old Athenians* were called *superstitious* by the Apostle, for erecting an *Altar to the unknown God*; but our *Papists*, we see, by their own confession, erect *Altars to unknown Saints, and unknown reliques*.

It may not be amiss to observe in this place, That the *Papists*, in their versions of the Scriptures into the modern tongues, have contrived, by various falsifications, to make them speak the language of their *Missals and Breviaries*, in order to sanctify their novel rites by the authority of the Apostles; and make the people believe, that they had been practised from the times even of the Gospel. Thus, to countenance this practice of *beatifying or making Saints* in the church, they have rendered a passage of *St. James* v. 11. not as it ought to be, *Behold how we account those blessed*; but, *Behold how we BEATIFY those, who have suffered with constancy*: and in favour also of their *processions*; where it is said, *Heb. xi. 30. that the walls of Jericho fell down, after they had compassed it about seven days*: their versions render it, *after a PROCESSION of seven days around it*. And, to give the better

[p] Mabill. Iter Ital. p. 225.

[q] Cathol. Christian, p. 246.

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better colour to their trade of *Pilgrimages*, *St. Paul*, according to their versions, requires it, as the qualification of *a good widow, that she have lodged PILGRIMS*, 1 Tim. v. 10. and *St. John* praises *Gainus*, for having dealt faithfully with PILGRIMS—3 John, ver. 5*.

But to pursue the objections of our Catholic; he declares my account of *St. Oreste*, whose name I suppose to have been derived from the mountain *Soracte*, on which his Monastery now stands, to be ridiculous beyond measure: yet Mr. *Addison*, who was no ridiculous Author, has related it as a certain fact; which he borrowed probably from some of their own writers, or at least from some of the Antiquaries of *Rome*, among whom I heard the same story. But if the notion of *fictional Saints* be so notoriously false, as he asserts it to be, let him tell us, if he can, in what History we may find the facts of those very Saints, whom I have named, and whom their Church adopts as genuine; *St. Oreste, Bacco, Quirinus, Remula*, and *Redempta, Concordia, Nympha, Mercurius* [r].

The creation of *Saints* is become as common almost, as the creation of Car- Canoniza-
dinals; there having seldom been a Pope, tions.
who did not add some to the Calendar.
Benedict XIII. canonized eight in one Summer; and his Successor *Clement XII.* the last Pope, four more. During my stay at *Rome*, I saw the *Beatification* of one *Andrew Conti*, of the family of the Pope then reigning, *Innocent XIII.* for this is another source of supplying fresh *Saints* to the Church; when, to humour the ambition of the Pope, or the other Princes of that Communion, this honour is conferred on some

* See a treatise intitled, *Popery an enemy to Scripture*, where the learned and ingenious Author, Mr. *Serces*, has given a large collection of these falsifications, made to support their several frauds and innovations.

[r] See Letter, p. 24.

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some of their name and family: and as there must be a testimony of miracles, wrought by every person so canonized or beatified, either when living or dead, so I was curious to inquire; what miracles were ascribed to this *beatified Andrew*; which I found to be nothing else, but a few contemptible stories, delivered down by tradition, which shewed only the weakness of the man, and the absurdity of believing, that God should exert his omnipotence for the production of such trifles.

As to the proof of miracles, which is essential to these *Canonizations*, every one will conceive, how easy it must be in a function contrived to serve the interest of the Church, and the ambition of its rulers, to procure such a testimonial of them, as will be sufficient for the purpose. In the *Deifications of antient Rome*, the attestation also of a miracle was held necessary to the act. In the case of *Romulus*, one *Julius Proculus*, a man said to be of a worthy and upright character, took a solemn oath, "that *Romulus* himself appeared to him, and ordered him "to inform the Senate of his being called up to "the assembly of the Gods, under the name of *Quirinus* [s];" and in the *Deification of the Casars*, a testimony upon oath, of an *Eagle's flying out of the funeral pile, towards heaven*, which was supposed to convey the soul of the deceased, was the *established proof of their Divinity* [t]. Now as these *pagan Deifications* are the only patterns in history, for the *Papish Canonizations*; so the invention of miracles is the single art, in which *modern Rome* is allowed to excel the antient.

In the *Jesuits College* at *St. Omar's*, the *Thomas Becket*. Father, who shewed us the House, happening to produce some *relique*, or memorial of *St. Thomas*, which he treated with much reverence, one of our company asked me, What

[s] Vid. Plutar. in rit. Romuli, Dionys. Halicar. l. 2. p. 124.
[t] Dio Cass. p. 598, 842.

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What *Thomas* he meant? Upon which I unwarily said, "It is *Thomas Becket*, who is worshipped as a great Saint, on this side of the water". "Yes, Sir," replied the *Jesuit*, with a severe look, "if there is any faith in history, he deserves to be esteemed a great Saint." But I may venture to affirm in *England*, what I did not care to dispute in a *College of Jesuits*, that this celebrated *Thomas* had more of the rebel than of the Saint in him; was a Prelate of a most daring, turbulent, seditious spirit; inflexibly obstinate, insatiably ambitious, intolerably insolent; whose violence the *Pope* himself endeavoured in vain to moderate; as it appears from such monuments, as the *Papists* themselves must allow to be authentic, a collection of *Becket's own Letters*, preserved still in the *Vatican*, and printed some years ago in *Brussels* [u].

From these Letters, I say, it appears, that not only the King, and the whole body of his Barons, but even the *Bishops*, *Abbots*, and *Clergy*, openly condemned his behaviour as highly rash, rebellious, and criminal [w]. Yet this man is now adored, as one of the principal Saints and Martyrs of the *Romish Church*.

Let our *Catholic* tell us also, if he pleases, what opinion his Church entertains of *Garnet the Jesuit*, who was privy to the *Gunpowder-plot*, and hanged for his treason: if he dares to speak his mind, he will declare him to be a Saint and Martyr of *Christ*; for such he is held to be at *Rome* and *St. Omer's*: yet all Protestants will rank him, I dare say, among those Saints, whom I justly call the *disturbers of Kingdoms*; and who merited the honour of their *Sainthood*, not by spread-

[u] Vid. Epist. & Vit. Div. Thomæ, 2 Vol. 4to. Bruxellis, 1682. l. 1. Ep. 4, 43.---it. vid. l. 2, 1. 94, &c.

[w] See our Author's *Prefatory Discourse* at length, p. lxx. & seq. for further Proofs of the Vileness, and even Villainy, of this capital Romish Saint.

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spreading the light of the Gospel, but scattering firebrands and destruction through the world.

Our Author cannot comprehend, why
Adoration I should bring in the *adoration of the Host*
of the host. among the other articles of my charge;
 since, by my own confession, I find no
 resemblance of it in any part of the *pagan* worship [x].

But I have given a good reason for my not finding it there, which might have taught *him* also, why I brought it in; because it was too absurd for the Practice even of the *Heathens*; who thought, that none could ever be so mad, as to make it a point of religion, *to eat their God*. This I shewed from the authority of *Tully*; whom I prefer therefore, he says, *to the Apostles and Evangelists*: as if those sacred writers had expressly declared *the sacramental bread to be God*; which all Protestants deny, in that gross and ridiculous sense, in which the *Papists* interpret them.

But as it is not my present purpose to
Transub- examine the real merit of *Transubstanti-*
stantiation. *ation*, so I shall take notice only of one argument that he alleges for it, which, if it has any force, must be allowed indeed to be conclusive; that "the unerring authority of the Church has declared it to be true, and enjoined the belief of it;" and after such a decision, "that it is the part of an Infidel, rather than a Christian, to ask, How can this be [y]?"

This is the last resort of *Popery*; the
Implicit sum of all their reasoning; to resolve
faith. all religion into an *implicit faith*, and a slavish obedience to the authority of the Church; which by *innumerable texts of Scripture*, says our Author, *is declared to be the indispensable duty of every Christian* [z]. We may spare ourselves then
 the

[x] See Pref. p. 15.

[y] See Catholic Christian, p. 32, 47, 52, 57.

[z] Ibid. p. 47.

the pains of thinking and inquiring; drop the perilous task of studying the Scriptures; the *Church*, like an indulgent mother, takes all that trouble upon herself; warrants her doctrines to be divine; and ensures our salvation, on the single condition of taking her word for it.

But all Protestants must see the horrible effects of such a principle; an *Inquisition* ready to satisfy all their doubts; a prison and tortures prepared for those, who dare to ask their priests, what *Nicodemus* asked our Saviour, *How can these things be?* Thus our Catholic, in mentioning the case of a Protestant converted to their faith, who may happen to be possessed still with some scruples, declares, "that he has nothing to fear in conforming himself to the authority of the Church; but very much, in making any scruple to hear and obey his spiritual Guides [a]."

As to my 6th and 7th instances of *their Paganism*, since our *Catholic* has offered nothing upon them worth the pains of considering, I shall refer the reader to my *Letter*, without troubling him with any thing farther about them, and proceed to the more important article of their *miracles*.

Here he begins to grow warm again, and declares, "That I am always offended with miracles, where-ever I meet with them; and is sorry, that I do not speak out in favour of my friends the *Freethinkers*, and shew the *Jewish* and *Christian* miracles to be no better, than those of the *Pagans* [b]." This is the constant refuge of baffled zealots, to throw the odium of *infidelity* and *free-thinking* on those, who dare to expose their impostures. But he hoped perhaps to find some even of *our own* Church ready to join with him in the cry; since he appears to be no stranger to the offence, which the freedom of *this very Letter*

[a] Ib. p. 65, 66.

[b] Pref. p. 4, 17.

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had given to certain men, who are too apt to consider their own opinions, as the standard of Christian faith; and to treat even the *defenders* of our religion as *deserters*, if they do not submit to act under their direction, and defend it by their principles. These men imagined, that I had attacked the *Popish miracles* with a gaiety, that seemed to contemn all miracles, and particularly those of *our Saviour*; by invading the force of *those rules*, which Mr. *Leslie* had established, as the *criterion* of *true miracles*: whereas the truth of the matter is, as I have often declared it to my friends, that, at the time of writing the *Letter*, I had never read Mr. *Leslie's* treatise, nor so much as knew, *what his rules were**.

*Author's
view in ex-
posing the
Popish mi-
racles.*

My only view was, to expose the forgery of the *Popish miracles* in the strongest manner that I was able; and, in spite of all the evidence, which they pretend to produce for them, to shew, that they stood upon no better ground, than those of their *Pagan Ancestors*. I had observed, not only from books, but from experience, what these Cavillers perhaps were not so well apprised of, that the *pretence of miracles* was the grand support of the *Romish Church*, and what gave a sanction to all their other frauds; that their constant appeal to a divine power, exerting itself miraculously amongst them, gave them not only their chief advantage against Protestants, but furnished the *Deists* also with the most obvious arguments against revelation itself: for, "These pious cheats, as Mr. *Leslie* says, are the forest
"disgraces of Christianity; which have bid the
"fairest of any one contrivance, to overturn the cer-
"tainty of the miracles of Christ, and the whole
"truth of the Gospel, by putting them all on the
"same

* For our Author's opinion of Mr. *Leslie's criterion* of true miracles, see his Prefatory Discourse at length, p. lxxxviii.

"same foot [c]." To destroy the authority therefore of these cheats, was to sap the foundation of *Popery*, and overturn the main pillar, on which its power subsists: which was the real motive of my dwelling longer on this, than on any other article, as our Catholic observes [d].

That my sentiments therefore on this head may neither be mistaken, nor suspected; and that I may give satisfaction, as far as I am able, to all, whom, by any freedom of expression, I may possibly have offended, either in this, or in any other of my writings; I take this occasion to declare, that I look upon *miracles*, when accompanied with all the circumstances proper to persuade us of the reality of the facts, said to be performed, and of the dignity of the end, for which they were performed, to be the most decisive proofs, that can be given, of the truth and divinity of any religion. This was evidently the case of the *Jewish* and of the *Christian miracles*; wrought in such a manner, as could leave no doubt upon the senses of those, who were the witnesses of them; and for the noblest end, for which the Deity can be conceived to interpose himself; the *universal good and salvation* of man. For the *Jewish* and *Christian dispensations* are but different parts of one and the same Scheme; mutually illustrating and confirming each other's authority: and from this view of them, in which they should always be considered, as necessarily connected, and dependent on each other, we see the weakness of that objection, commonly made to the *Mosaic* part, on the account of its being calculated for the use only of a *peculiar people*; whereas, in truth, it was the beginning, or first opening, of an *universal System*; which, from the time of *Moses*, was gradually manifested to the world

*His opinion
in relation to
miracles.*

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by

[c] See *Leslie's Short Method with the Deists*, p. 24. Vol. I. of his Works.

[d] Preface, p. 4.

by the successive missions of *the Prophets*, till *thatfulness of time*, or *coming of the Messiah*, when *life and immortality were brought to light by the Gospel*, or the chief good and happiness of man perfectly revealed to him.

That *Miracles* have ever been thought the most authentic proofs of a divine mission, seems to be declared by the sense of all nations, since there never was a religion pretending to be divine, which did not support that pretension by an appeal to them: yet the innumerable forgeries of this sort, which have been imposed upon mankind in all ages, are so far from weakening the credibility of the *Jewish* and *Christian miracles*, that they strengthen it. For how could we account for a practice so *universal*, of forging miracles for the support of *false religions*, if on *some occasions* they had not actually been wrought, for the confirmation of a *true one*? Or how is it possible, that so many *spurious copies* should pass upon the world, without some *genuine original*, from which they were drawn; whose *known existence*, and *tried success*, might give an appearance of probability to the *counterfeit*? Now, of all the miracles of antiquity, there are none that can pretend to the character of originals, but those of the *Old and New Testament*; which, though the oldest by far, of all others; of which any monuments now remain in the world, have yet maintained their credit to this day, through the perpetual opposition and scrutiny of ages; whilst all the rival productions of fraud and craft have long ago been successively exploded, and sunk into utter contempt. An event, that cannot reasonably be ascribed to any other cause, but to the natural force and effect of truth, which, though defaced for a time by the wit, or depressed by the power, of man, is sure still to triumph, in the end, over all the false mimicry of art, and the vain efforts of human policy.

I have charged the Popish Church, in my *Letter*, with many instances of *forged miracles*; to which this

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Author does not think fit to make any particular reply; but contents himself with a general answer, which must needs be thought curious: for he observes,

Popish miracles.

"That whether the miracles, which I have pitched upon, be true or false, there is nothing at least heathenish in them; and consequently nothing that shews the conformity, which I pretend to demonstrate, between Popery and Paganism [e]." Which is, in effect, to say, that allowing them to be forged, yet they were not forged by *Pagan*, but by *Christian Priests*; not for the purposes of *Pagan*, but of *Christian superstition*, so that I cannot with any propriety call them *heathenish*.---But are they not all copied from the patterns of *Paganism*? Are they not applied to the same purposes of fraud and delusion; to keep their people in a slavish subjection to an *idolatrous worship*; and to acquire wealth and power to the priesthood? This certainly is downright *Paganism*, and the most detestable part of it.

He proceeds, however, to assert with his usual gravity, "That God has been pleased, in every age, to work most evident miracles in their Church, by the *ministry of his Saints*; in raising the dead to life; in curing the blind and the lame; in casting out devils; in healing inveterate diseases in a moment, attested by the most authentic monuments; which will be a standing evidence to all nations, that the Church, in which they are wrought, is not that *Idolatrous Pagan Church*, which I pretend it to be, but the true Spouse of Christ---[f]." This is the constant voice of all the *Roman Apologists*; that "the Catholicism of their Church is demonstrated by the notoriety of their miracles [g]." But since the end of all miracles is to convert unbelievers; if their miracles be really wrought by the power

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[e] Pref. p. 18.

[f] Ib. 18, 19.

[g] Bellarm. de Eccles. Milit. l. 4. c. 14.

power of *Christ*, why are they not wrought, like the *miracles of Christ*, in open day-light; in the midst of unbelieving nations; not for the acquisition of *gain* or *power* to particular persons, but for the benevolent ends of conferring some *general good*, by reforming mens lives, enlightening their understandings, and promoting truth and peace and charity amongst men? Why are none of them wrought in *Protestant* countries, for whose conversion they are always alleged; but huddled over among their own bigotted votaries, prepared by an habitual credulity, to receive any imposture, that their Priests can invent [b]?

While *St. Thomas's Shrine* flourished at *Becket's Canterbury*, his Saintship was demonstrated by *perpetual miracles* [i]; in which, as the Historians of those times tell us, he far outdid not only all other Saints, but even *our Saviour* himself. There were two volumes of them preserved in the Church of *Canterbury*; and another book in *France*, in which there was an account of *two hundred and seventy*. *Peter of Blois*, a celebrated writer of that age, after drawing a parallel between *Thomas the Apostle*, and *Thomas the Martyr*, says, "I do not pretend to compare a *Martyr* with an *Apostle*; for an *Apostle* is greater: but it is glorious for us to have a *Martyr*, who bears the name of an *Apostle*, and who equals or surpasses him in his miracles. That great *Apostle* cannot take it amiss, that the Holy Spirit should enable others to work greater wonders, and in greater number, than him, since the Lord both of the *Apostles* and *Martyrs* is content to be outdone by them himself in this particular:

[b] See in our Author's Prefatory Discourse at length, p. xcii. a remarkable Story related by M. de Marolles, which will shew how easily people possessed with a superstitious regard for miracles, can persuade themselves, that they can see, what, in truth, has no existence.

[i] Vide Vit. S. Thomæ Epistolis præfix. Vol. I. 142. See further, also, our Author's Prefatory Discourse, p. xciii. in the Notes.

“ cular: Ye shall do, says he, not only these works,
 “ that I do; but greater works than these shall ye do
 “ [k].” Which prediction, as they declare, was
 literally fulfilled by St. Thomas: “ Whose blood, being
 “ collected with care immediately after his death,
 “ not only cured all distempers, but raised even great
 “ numbers of the dead to life: and when the quan-
 “ tity was found insufficient for the demand, that
 “ was made of it, they were forced to supply it with
 “ water; the least drop of which, when tinged with
 “ the Martyr’s blood, and administred to the sick, or
 “ infused into the mouths of the dead, had all the
 “ same effects; so that it was sent abroad into all
 “ parts of the Christian world, as an infallible cure
 “ for all kinds of diseases [l].”

The fame of these miracles drew Kings and Princes
 from abroad, and infinite crouds at home, with daily
 offerings to his Shrine; but this harvest was no soon-
 er over, than the power of the Saint fell
 with the gain of the Priest; and all his
 miracles ceased, when the honour of his
 Altar stood most in need of their support; so that the place where he was former-
 ly worshipped, and where such mighty wonders
 were once wrought, is now shewn as a monument
 only of the folly and superstition of our Ancestors.
 But though he works no miracles in England, where
 his bones lie deposited; he works them still in foreign
 countries, and will continue to do so, as long as there
 is a Popish Church and a Priesthood, who find their
 interest in supporting them. For, as Lactantius justly
 observes, “ Among those who seek power and gain
 “ from their religion, there will never be wanted an
 “ inclination to forge and to lye for it [m].”

*The saint's
 power, and the
 priest's gain,
 fall together.*

They

[k] Jo. xiv. 12.
 [l] La vie de St. Thomas, p. 442. 4to. It. Vita Italicè, p.
 430. &c. Pet. Blesens. Epist. 17, & 46. Baron. Ann. 1173,
 No. 7. Speculum Sanctor. ap. Labbé Biblioth. Nov. &c.
 [m] Lactan. de fals. relig. 1. 4.

They tell us indeed of *many miracles* of the greatest kind, wrought by their Missionaries in *India*: but they all rest upon no other authority, than the suspected relations of those Missionaries; and are even contradicted by some of their gravest writers. A Royal Professor of *Salamanca*, in one of his public lectures, says, "It does not appear to me, that the Christian faith has been propounded to the *Indians* in such a manner, as would reasonably induce them to receive it; for I hear of *no miracles* performed amongst them, nor of such *examples* of the *Christian life*, as there ought to be; but, on the contrary, of much scandal and impiety."

Another learned *Jesuit*, who had spent many years among the *Indians*, in a treatise on the method of converting them, says; "What signifies all our preaching? What stress can we lay upon it? We work *no miracles* [n]."

But, among all the boasted miracles of these Missionaries, they have never so much as pretended to the *gift of Tongues*; which is the first thing necessary to the conversion of barbarous nations; and without which all their preaching, and even miracles themselves, would be useless. Yet St. *Xaverius* himself, the *Apostle of the Indies*, and one of their great *Saints and workers of miracles*, laments, in several of his letters, the insuperable difficulties, which he had to struggle with in his Mission [o], and his incapacity of doing any good in those countries, for the want of this gift [p]. And in *Japan* particularly, where, according to his account, a plentiful harvest was open to him, and great numbers disposed to become Christians; "God grant, says he, that I may soon learn their language, so as to be able to explain things divine, and do some service at last to the Christian cause. For at present, indeed, I am nothing better than

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[n] Hospinian. de Origin. Jesuitar. p. 230.

[o] Xaverii Epist. l. 5.

[p] Ibid. l. 14.

" a statue among them ; and, while they are talking
 " and inquiring many things about me, am quite
 " dumb *through my ignorance of their tongue* : but I
 " am now *acting the boy again* in learning the ele-
 " ments of it [q]."

From the principles of our Religion, and
 the authority of the primitive Fathers, *Miracles*
 we are exhorted *to try the Miracles* by *how to be*
 their end and tendency, and the nature of *try'd.*
that doctrine, which is proposed to be
established by them. And if by this Rule we examine
 the *Popish Miracles*, even such as are authorized by
 the *Bulls of Popes*, condemning all as *Heretics*, who
 do not believe them, we shall find them pretended to
 be wrought for no other end, but the propagation
 of *Enthusiasm* and *Monkery*, and the confirmation of
 doctrines and rites, which are not only *useless*, but
 apparently *hurtful* to mankind.

The *Jesuit Maldonatus*, in his Comment on *Matt.*
vii. 22. observes, " That *St. Chrysostom, Jerom, Eu-*
themius, Theophylact, prove by several instances,
 " that real miracles had been performed by those,
 " who were not Catholic Christians." *St. Chrysostom*
 declares, " that miracles are proper only to excite
 " sly and vulgar minds ; that men of sense have
 " no occasion for them ; and that they frequently
 " carry some untoward suspicion along with them
 " [r]." " We are to take notice, *says St. Jerom*,
 " that some are said to have the gift of the Spirit,
 " who do not hold the truth of the Gospel ; which
 " may serve to silence those *Heretics*, who, if they
 " can but work a miracle, fancy presently, that they
 " have demonstrated the truth of their faith [s]." " If miracles, *says St. Austin*, are wrought in the
 " Catholic Church, its Catholicism is not thereby
 " mani-

[q] Ibid. l. 3. 5.

[r] Vide *Chrysost. Oper. Edit. Benedict. T. 5. 271. a. 376.*
b. T. 8. 296. a. 205. 455.

[s] Vid. *Hieron. in Galat. 3. Oper. T. 4. p. 251. Edit. Bened.*

“ manifested, because miracles are wrought in it;
 “ but the miracles themselves are to be received, be-
 “ cause they are wrought in a Church that is Ca-
 “ tholic.” And *Theodoret* tells us, “ that we are
 “ commanded, not to give credit to them, when
 “ the performers of them teach *things contrary to*
 “ *true piety* [t]”

If agreeably then to the injunctions of the Apostles, and Primitive Fathers, we sit down to examine the pretended miracles of *Rome*, we shall find them always the most numerous, and the most confidently attested, in proportion to the absurdity of the doctrine or practice, in whose favour they are alleged; as in the case of *Transubstantiation*, *Purgatory*, the *worship of Images*, *Reliques*, *Crucifixes*, *Indulgences*, and all the *tricks of Monks*; as if miracles were of no other use, but to subvert the reason and senses of mankind, and confound all the distinctions between right and wrong: but if there be any rule of judging of their reality, or any power in man to discern truth from falsehood, we must necessarily conclude, from the *nature and end* of the *Popish miracles*, that, whatever testimonies may be brought to support them, they were all, without exception, either wrought by *wicked Spirits*, or *forged by wicked men*.

I have now run through every thing, that seemed worthy of any notice in my Adversary's Preface; where I have the satisfaction to observe, that though he accuses me so freely of *slander and falsehood*, yet he has not denied so much as *one* of the *numerous facts*, on which I ground my charge of their *Paganism*. It was upon the strength of *these facts*, that I first offered my Letter to the judgment of the public; and the favourable reception which it has met with, shews, that it is not thought trifling, and foreign to the purpose, as he affirms it to be; but, on the contrary, pertinent, and decisive of the question, which it professes to illustrate. It is a folly there-fore

[t] Vid. *Hospin*, de doctrina Jesuit. p. 388.

fore to attack the *credit* of it, till he comes prepared to overthrow the *facts*, on which it is built; for, while these are allowed to be firm, the inference is undeniable, "That Popery has borrowed its principal ceremonies and doctrines from the rituals of Paganism."

The truth of this charge is so evident to all, who know any thing of Antiquity, that though a *Missionary*, as we may imagine, would be glad to conceal it even from *Papists*, and much more from *Protestants*, whom he is endeavouring to convert, yet all their own writers, who have any candour and learning, make no scruple to acknowledge it. *M. de Marolles* informs us, how he once surprised a great Archbishop of France, by a frank declaration, that Popery has taken its principal ceremonies and doctrines from Paganism: which he afterwards demonstrated to him at large, by a particular deduction of it through many of the same instances, on which I have insisted in my Letter [u]. The learned *De Choul* also thus concludes his book *on the Religion of the old Romans*: "If we consider the case attentively, we shall find very many institutions of our religion to have been borrowed from the ceremonies of the *Egyptians* and the *Gentiles*-- all which our Priests now make use of in our mysteries, by referring to the only true God, *Jesus Christ*, what the ignorance, false religion, and senseless superstition of the *Pagans* had applied to their Gods, and to mortal men after their consecration [w]."

Our Catholic however concludes his work in a very different stile: and, in a kind of triumph for an imagined victory, undertakes by my own way of reasoning, to demonstrate the same Conformity between the English and Romish Church, which

The answerer's absurd triumph.

[u] *Monf. de la Feuillade*, Archbishop d'Embrun--See *Memoires de Marolles*, par. 2. p. 209.

[w] *De religione Veter. Romanor.* ad fin.

I have attempted to shew between *Popery and Paganism*; from the number of observances, which our Church still retains from the old Religion of Rome: in consequence of which, he says, "if my argument be right, our Protestantism at last will be found to be nothing better than heathenish Idolatry."

But if we recollect the definition, which I have given above, of *Popery*, the question will be reduced to a short issue; by considering only, whether any of those particulars, which prove their religion to be *paganish*, are retained still in ours; whether we have any *incense, holy water, or lamps* in our Churches; any *votive offerings* hanging round our pillars; any *miraculous images*; any *adoration of Saints*; any *altars in the streets, the way-sides, and tops of hills*; any *processions, miracles, or monkery* amongst Us: if, after all our reformation, we retain any of these, we are so far undoubtedly as criminal as they; but if none of them can be found upon us, we are clear at least from all that *Pagan idolatry*, which glares out so manifestly from every part of the *Popish* worship.

All that he can object to us on this head, amounts to no more than this; "That there are several observances retained in our sacred Offices, which we use in common with the Church of Rome." We own it: but take them all to be such, as we may retain with innocence. We profess to retain all, that is truly Christian; all, that is enjoined by the Gospel, or by just inference deducible from it. But if, besides all this, they can discover anything amongst us, that they can claim as *their own*, or that may properly be called *Popish*; I should willingly resign it to them; and consent to any expedient, that may remove us farther still from *Popery*, and unite us more closely with all sober Protestants. But whether any thing of this sort be remaining in our present establishment, or how far any of the instances, which he declares to have been borrowed from Rome, may want a review, or further reformation, as it is not the part of a private

Popery and Paganism. 97

ate man to determine, so I shall refer it, as I ought, to the judgment of my *Superiors*.

Our Author adds, that he hopes his pains may be of some use, as well to admonish all serious *Papists*, of the fraud and foppery of their own worship, as to deter Protestants from running over to a Church, so notoriously corrupt and *Heathenish*. My aversion to *Popery*, says he, is grounded, not only on its *paganism* and *idolatry*, but on its being calculated for the support of *despotic power*, and inconsistent with the *genius* of a *free government*. This I take to be its real character; which I do not however extend to the *particular professors* of it; many of whom I know to be men of great probity, politeness, and humanity; who, through the prejudice of education, do not either *see* the consequences of what they are trained to profess; or, through a mistaken point of honour, think it their *duty* to adhere to the religion of their Ancestors. With these I can live, not only in *charity*, but in *friendship*; without the least inclination to offend them any farther, than by obstructing all endeavours to introduce a religion amongst us, which would necessarily be ruinous to the *Liberty* of *our Country*.

Thus much, concludes he, I thought myself obliged to say, that, while *the Papists* look upon me as an enemy, they may consider me, at least, as a fair one; an enemy to the *idolatrous and slavish principles* of their Church; but free from all prejudice or enmity to their *persons*.

F I N I S.

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